





## Israel is adding to existing settlements — Weizman

ALEXANDRIA (R) — Israeli President Ezer Weizman said on Sunday that Israel was adding to existing Jewish settlements and not creating new ones.

"There are no new settlements. There are just additions to homes in existing settlements. I say that we have to think deeply, and not about 100 or 200 dunum [measurement of land] but what the solution is between us and the Palestinians," Mr. Weizman said after talks with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

Middle East peacemaking has been in crisis for about six months over Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's plans to expand Jewish settlements on Arab land occupied by Israel since the 1967 Middle East war and suicide bombings that have killed 20 Israelis in the last two months.

Israeli-Palestinian talks stopped in March, when Mr. Netanyahu broke ground on a Jewish settlement on the hilltop of Jabal Abu Ghneim in Arab east Jerusalem.

President Weizman told a joint news conference a decision had to be made on the "map between us and the Palestinians and in the political limbo this means a final settlement."

"There are also the phases we have been promised. There are some Israelis who don't approve of this policy but we have to look towards reaching settlement in 2000," President Weizman said.

"Israel is a democratic nation. Netanyahu was elected democratically just like [Palestinian President Yasser] Arafat was elected democratically. We have to be aware that the solutions will be announced by Netanyahu's government but some people won't agree with this," he said.



Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak (right) and his Israeli counterpart Ezer Weizman (left) gesture to each other during their joint press conference held Saturday in Alexandria (Reuters)

## Egypt, Israel say seeking to solve spy row

ALEXANDRIA (R) — The presidents of Egypt and Israel said on Sunday they were looking into legal means to resolve a disagreement on the fate of an Israeli man convicted of spying in Egypt.

Egypt's Hosni Mubarak and Israel's Ezer Weizman were speaking at a news conference after they discussed the case of Israeli textile mechanic Azzam Azzam, sentenced last month to 15 years in jail for spying in Egypt.

"We sent him [Azzam] to court because we couldn't deal with the issue ourselves after it became public," Mr. Mubarak said.

"The big propaganda after the verdict makes matters more complicated, but I discussed with Weizman the

legal methods to solve this problem," he added.

Mr. Weizman said: "I have discussed this issue a lot and we have agreed to discuss this further. We will look into legal means to resolve the matter."

President Mubarak has already said he would not pardon Azzam because Israel "misbehaved" the issue. He told the news conference Egypt would have struck a deal to release the Israeli citizen had Israel not stirred up such a fuss about the case.

"You made this into a problem. If you hadn't said that he was arrested just four days before the [November 1996] economic summit, we would have released him after an agreement

between the security apparatuses," President Mubarak said.

"Your media campaigns won't solve a thing, it'll just complicate things further."

After the verdict, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that Egypt's conviction of Azzam was "distorted" and raised serious questions about the Egyptian judiciary.

Israel has been demanding Azzam be released. President Mubarak has refused to interfere, saying it was a judicial issue.

Azzam's Egyptian accomplice, Imad Abdul Hamid Ismail, and two fugitive Israeli women, were sentenced to 25 years in jail with hard labour.

## Syria's foreign minister urges Netanyahu to take tough step

DAMASCUS (AFP) — Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Sharaa said in remarks published Sunday that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu must make difficult decisions in order to let peace take hold in the Middle East.

"We are in agreement on making difficult decisions on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks of negotiations [with Israel] but it's true that it's up to Mr. Netanyahu to [also] make difficult decisions," Mr. Sharaa was quoted as saying by the government newspaper Tishrin.

"Syria already agreed to participate in the peace

process set in motion five years ago, but the Israeli party has halted the process and it's up to it [Israel] to resume at the point where it left off," he said.

Israeli-Syrian negotiations were suspended in February 1996. The Israeli government has rejected Syria's demands that it return the entire Golan Heights, which the Jewish state has occupied since 1967.

The previous Labour government was reported to have agreed in principle to hand back the Golan in return for security guarantees.

Mr. Sharaa emphasised

the "importance" of a meeting he is due to have Monday in New York with U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly session.

Ms. Albright made her maiden tour as secretary of state to the Middle East at the beginning of September in an attempt to get the peace process moving.

"Progress is tied to Israel's inclination to resume the talks where they ended and to its commitment to the decisions" of the previous Israeli government, Mr. Sharaa added.

## Iraqi opposition to meet British, U.S. officials in London

DUBAI (AFP) — The Foreign Office in London is to host a meeting with Iraqi opposition groups Monday, in the first such contact since the Labour Party took power in Britain in May, the opposition said.

Opposition figures contacted by Agence France Presse said Kurdish, Shiite Muslim fundamentalist and secular groups have been invited to the meeting, as well as a U.S. diplomat, to discuss British and U.S. policy toward Iraq.

Britain is to be represented by a Foreign Office official and a diplomat.

"It will be the first contact at this level between the Iraqi opposition and the new Labour government which has made respect for human rights one of its foreign policy priorities," Mohammad Abdul Jabbar of the Iraqi National Congress (INC), an umbrella group, said by telephone from London.

The meeting will also discuss the U.N. oil-for-food

accord under which Iraq is allowed to export limited amounts of crude to finance humanitarian imports for its sanctions-hit population, the opposition said.

Iraq has been under U.N. sanctions since its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

The London talks will also assess the state of the opposition, which was weakened by an Iraqi army incursion into the Kurdish-held north in August 1996, and Baghdad's efforts to open a dialogue, the opposition said.

Among the groups invited are the Kurdistan Democratic Party and its rival, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, the INC, the Amman-based Iraqi National Accord, a Shiite group, the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SAIRI), and a monarchist movement.

Wafiq Samarral, a former head of military intelligence who defected to Syria in 1994, is also invited to the London talks.

## Filipino on death row in UAE given more time to seek clemency

ABU DHABI (AP) — The supreme court has postponed the trial of a Filipino facing the death penalty to give the victim's family more time to consider clemency, the Philippines' ambassador said Sunday. The hearing, which had been scheduled this weekend, was postponed to Dec. 13, said Philippines Ambassador Roy Seneres.

John Aquino is charged with the 1989 stabbing death of Harbajan Singh, his Indian roommate. He says he killed Singh in self-defence.

The supreme court began hearing Aquino's case last November after he was sentenced to death by a lower court and an appeal was rejected by another court.

The death sentence must be upheld by the high court and endorsed by the president of the emirates before it can be carried out.

Under Islamic law, the victim's family has the right to demand the death penalty in a murder case or grant clemency, usually in exchange for financial compensation.

The vice president of the Philippines, Joseph Estrada, has raised \$50,000 from personal friends in the Philippines, Mr. Seneres said. The law sets a minimum of (\$41,000) for such payments.

Aquino has written Singh's family asking forgiveness. He has said he is willing to spend his life in prison to atone for his crime. Mr. Seneres also sent a letter seeking clemency to Singh's relatives residing in Britain, he said. There has been no response to either appeal, Mr. Seneres said.

## Head of Palestinian welfare society denies Hamas links

## Bahr pushes for reopening 16 closed welfare organisations aiding 10,000 families in Gaza

GAZA CITY (AFP) — The head of one of 16 welfare organisations shut down by the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) in a crackdown against Hamas denied Sunday that they were run by the Islamist group.

"My association, along with 15 others which were shut down by the Palestinian [National] Authority, works for the poor and has no connection with Hamas," said Ahmad Bahr, director of the Islamic Association in the Gaza Strip.

The Islamic Association is a welfare organisation offering social assistance, religious education and

food distribution but was shut down Thursday by Palestinian police who consider it a key part of the Hamas network in the area. Mr. Bahr said he had asked the Palestinian Legislative Council and human rights organisations to push for the reopening of the 16 closed welfare organisations which he said look after 10,000 families in Gaza.

Meanwhile, the Palestinian Human Rights Centre said it was "shocked" by the closure of the Gaza welfare organisations.

"These moves contribute nothing to democracy and pluralism in Palestine," it said in a statement.

The PNA launched a major crackdown against Hamas last week, responding to U.S. and Israeli demands following the discovery that four suicide bombers behind recent attacks in Jerusalem came from the Palestinian territories.

In the past week, Palestinian security forces arrested at least 20 suspected Hamas activists in the West Bank town of Nablus.

Following the anti-Hamas offensive, Israel agreed Sunday to resume negotiations with the Palestinians on implementing interim self-rule agreements and release \$17 million in frozen funds to the PNA.

## Algerian army blasts GIA stronghold, papers report

ALGIERS (AFP) — Heavily-armed Algerian troops backed by helicopter gunships attacked a stronghold of the extremist Armed Islamic Group (GIA) south of the capital Algiers, press reports said here Sunday.

Powerful blasts could be heard coming from the Ouled Aïal region, south of the capital on Friday and Saturday, the papers said, during what appeared to be a well-planned and extended attack.

The village is near the sites of two recent extremist-linked massacres, in Sidi Moussa and Bentahla, that killed several hundred people.

The newspapers said the village had been deserted by its inhabitants and was now used by the extremist group as a well-fortified stronghold, to which they returned after each attack.

The army used armoured

vehicles and bulldozers to plough a path through minefields laid in a protective ring around the hideout. Helicopter gunships blasted the area from the air, the papers said.

The press said the objective was complete annihilation of the suspected Islamic terrorists. There were no official announcements about the attack, and no casualty figures were available Sunday.

On Aug. 29, slaughters in several villages nearby killed at least 98 people in Islamic-linked violence, according to an official toll.

Residents put the number of victims at between 200-300.

Last Tuesday, officials said that 85 were killed in Bentahla in a similarly savage attack.

Survivors there claimed that between 180 and 200 had perished.

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## PRAYER TIMES

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## Jordan, Lebanon to implement protocol on agricultural exchanges

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan and Lebanon announced Sunday that they have reached an agreement to implement a protocol on agricultural exchanges.

The agreement followed talks held by Minister of Agriculture Mijhem Khreisha and his Lebanese counterpart Shawqi Fakhouri, each accompanied by a team of officials and agricultural specialists.

After the meeting, Mr. Khreisha said the protocol regulates the exchanges of agricultural products in winter and summer, depending on the two countries' actual needs.

Stating that Jordan's high-quality agricultural products are produced in the winter season, when Lebanon is in need of them, Mr. Khreisha said Jordanian and Lebanese teams will meet every six months to review their agricultural needs and to amend provisions of the protocol to cater to these needs.

Jordan normally exports to Lebanon a variety of agricultural products grown in the Jordan Valley in winter, as well as



A delegation led by Minister of Agriculture Mijhem Khreisha (centre right) concludes an agreement with a Lebanese delegation, led by Lebanese Minister Shawqi Fakhouri, to exchange agricultural products (Petra photo)

watermelons in the summer, and imports Lebanese cherries and apples, mainly in the summer.

Mr. Khreisha announced that an agreement was reached with his Lebanese counterpart on extending invitations to Arab ministers of agriculture for a conference to

lay down the basis for cooperation to achieve agricultural integration and to deal with the challenges facing the Arab World's agricultural production.

Expressing satisfaction with the talks, Mr. Fakhouri said the periodic meetings tend to bolster bilateral cooperation in

agricultural fields. He added that Lebanon is currently increasing the areas cultivated with fruit trees and vegetables and is making plans to avoid bottlenecks in marketing the products.

He said the agreement will protect the interests of farmers in the two countries.

## Majali expresses belief in imminent breakthrough in peace process

MUSCAT (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali has expressed his belief that a breakthrough in the Middle East peace process will happen shortly, not only on the Palestinian-Israeli track but also on the Syrian-Israeli track.

In an interview with the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Dr. Majali said "there are signs from the U.S. that the question of peace in the Middle East will be among the American government's political priorities, and this in itself calls for optimism."

"We have to admit that the realisation of peace in our region is a complex task and not easy to

achieve but it is inevitable that the peace process will resume, despite the ups and downs and the tension that emerges now and then," the prime minister added.

On the current deadlock, the prime minister said "the peace process is currently at a standstill due to Israel's intransigent position and because the present Israeli leadership follows tactics not in line with the peace process, as it believes that it can secure peace and security without returning to the Arabs their legitimate rights. This is impossible to attain because the whole world is now levelling criticism at the Israeli

leadership and criticises the Israeli policies."

When asked about Jordan's participation in the Middle East and North Africa Economic Summit in Doha in November, the prime minister replied that Qatar has not extended invitations for this summit.

"From the very beginning we have expressed our belief in and support for the multilateral phase of the Middle East peace process and we attended the first such summit in Casablanca, the second in Amman, and the third in Cairo," according to Dr. Majali, who is currently on a three-day visit to Oman. "If the Arab Nation

decides to boycott the conference, we will not attend it," he said.

Dr. Majali Sunday toured a number of Omani businesses and factories near the Omani capital of Muscat and said the industrial progress in Oman is a source of pride for Arabs.

Minister of Health and Medical Care Ashraf Kurdi and Minister of Education and Higher Education Munther Masri, who are accompanying Dr. Majali, met their respective counterparts and discussed Jordanian-Omani cooperation in health and educational fields.

## Six convicted for attempting to smuggle arms to West Bank

By Rana Hussein  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The State Security Court Sunday sentenced six people, including a woman, to prison terms ranging from five to ten years with hard labour after being found guilty of attempting to smuggle illegal arms to the West Bank.

The court tribunal sentenced Ahmad Shihdeh, 28, Nidal Taleb, 32, (sentenced in absentia), Taleb Mohammad, 58, Mahmoud Hussein, 40, and Nawaf Hussein, 42, to 15-year terms on charges of attempting to smuggle automatic weapons and guns to the West Bank via the Dead Sea.

However, their sentences

were immediately commuted to ten years by the military court, presided over by Judge Yousef Faouri and including Judges Aref Siyouf and Salem Saudi.

"because all five men are supporting families."

The sixth defendant, Zeinat Mustafa, 45, first received a 10-year imprisonment term for complicity in attempting to smuggle illegal arms.

But the court decided to reduce the sentence by half "because of the case's circumstances and because [she is] a woman and a widow."

According to court documents, the group was apprehended by Jordanian authorities on Feb. 24, 1997 in the Dead Sea area

with the weapons in their possession.

The group, who several months prior to the incident met with an Israeli man to arrange the deal in a tourist area, hid the weapons in pieces of clothing "in order to smuggle them to the West Bank and sell them there."

Also Sunday, the same court sentenced three men to 10 years imprisonment with hard labour after being convicted of drug trafficking.

The court found Mahmoud Abdullah, 41, Omar Salem, 29, and Salem Mohammad, 25, guilty of trafficking 475 kilograms of hashish in the Qatraneh area on Oct. 14, 1996, and originally sentenced them each to a 15-

year prison term and ordered each to pay JD10,000 in fines.

"But since [they] are young and deserve a second chance, we decided to 'commute [their] sentences to 10 years,' the court said.

The court acquitted a fourth suspect, Ra'd Atallah, 30, on the same charge "for lack of evidence."

Court transcripts indicated that the three men hid the drugs in secret compartments of a trailer that was heading from Amman to Aqaba.

The trailer was intercepted by security forces midway in the Qatraneh area, court documents said.

All verdicts will automatically be reviewed by the Court of Cassation within 30 days.

## Chinese delegation to discuss joint investments, increased trade

AMMAN (Petra) — A Chinese delegation led by the deputy minister of trade is due in Amman shortly for talks with officials on prospects of joint Chinese-Jordanian investments in the two countries, according to China's ambassador to Jordan Liu Baoli Sunday.

The Chinese government has undertaken steps toward expanding economic and trade exchanges between Jordan and China, which amounted to \$108 million in 1996, the ambassador said in a statement to mark China's national day, which falls on Oct. 1.

He said economic, political, and cultural relations

between the two states are progressing and hopefully will continue to flourish.

He stated that Jordanian and Chinese views concerning regional and international issues are identical.

Referring to the situation in the Middle East, the ambassador said it remained dangerous despite the visit by U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, and disclosed that his country has asked Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to alter his government's policy, quit his intransigence, and resume peace negotiations with the Palestinians, the Syrians, and the

Lebanese on the basis of the Madrid Conference and the Oslo Accords, which embody the principle of exchanging land for peace.

The ambassador called on Israel to halt its settlement programmes in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, lift the blockade imposed on Palestinian lands, and withdraw Israeli forces from southern Lebanon and the Golan Heights in accordance with U.N. Resolutions 242, 338, and 425.

He said the Chinese leadership deeply appreciates His Majesty King Hussein's endeavours toward the attainment of a just and comprehensive peace.

## Children's literature forum focuses on children's creative endeavours

AMMAN (Petra) — Deputising for Her Majesty Queen Noor, Minister of Social Development and Acting Minister of Culture and Youth Mohammad Mamsar Sunday opened the Sixth Annual Cultural Forum, entitled "Children's Literature: The Experiment and Creativity" at the Royal Cultural Centre.

In his speech, Dr. Mamsar said the ministry has a specialised department for children's literature and culture and added that the Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NAF) has played a "pioneering role in this field" through the Queen Noor Award for Children's Literature, as well as nationwide activities advocating children's rights and welfare.

The five-day programme will focus on Jordan's development in the fields of children's art and literature and the role of media and educational systems in raising awareness of children's literature and encouraging their creativity.

The forum, which brings together prominent Jordanian and Arab writers, will include study workshops for children aged 10-12 years in drama, poetry, story-writing, and art supervised by the NAF's Arts Centre.

## Jordan preparing to join international intellectual property rights group

GENEVA (Petra) — Jordan is making arrangements to join the Bern-based International Union for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works (IUPALW) and hopes to establish a regional office to ensure protection of intellectual property rights, Minister of Culture and Youth Qasem Abu Ain said here Saturday.

Dr. Abu Ain, during a meeting by heads of offices of the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), called on the organisation to help Jordan achieve this objective.

Under IUPALW, which was established under an 1886 treaty, member states must afford the same protection to the copyrights of the nationals of other member states as its own.

The treaty also prescribes

minimum standards of protection. For example, copyright protection generally continues throughout an author's life and for 50 years after his or her death.

It includes special provisions for the developing nations.

Dr. Abu Ain said Jordan aspires to host the regional office, which can offer training to personnel working in the field of securing intellectual property protection.

He expressed Jordan's commitment to respecting and protecting intellectual property rights, noting that the Council of Ministers has recently endorsed a draft law in this matter and referred it to the Lower House of Parliament for debate.

that the University of Jordan is now offering students a special course on international property rights through the faculty of law, with the purpose of training a generation of lawyers with sufficient knowledge of this subject.

He said concerned government departments have already modernised laws concerning the protection of industrial property and a law on trade relations, in cooperation with WIPO, for the purpose of protecting people's rights and encouraging creative work in all fields.

According to the minister, Jordan is currently preparing a study concerning the protection of folklore and public heritage.

### WHAT'S GOING ON

#### DARAT AL FUNUN SUMMER '97 FESTIVAL

- \* Graphics by Rafa Nasiri of Iraq, Ziad Dallout of Syria, and Najia Mehadjji at the South Hall.
- \* Paintings by Jordanian artist Mohammad Qailoka at the Middle Hall.
- \* Sculpture, drawings, and paintings by Jordanian artist Rajwa Ali.
- \* Works by contemporary Arab artists at the Blue House.
- \* Paintings by children of Zarqa reflecting on the problem of pollution at the Byzantine church.

#### FILM

- \* Video — "Le Monde du Silence" at the French Cultural Centre, Jabal Weibdeh at 8:30 p.m.

#### LECTURE

- \* "Jerusalem in Islamic History" (in Arabic) by Dr. Abdul Aziz Douiri at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, Jabal Amman at 6:00 p.m.

#### EXHIBITIONS

- \* Quilt exhibition "Piecing It Together" by Ms. Virginia Harris at the American Center, Abdoun, until Oct. 1
- \* Paintings by Fatima El-Helou at Institut Cervantes, Jabal Amman, until Oct. 4.
- \* "The Projects of the Essence: Aspects of Italian Painting in the '90s" at the Royal Cultural Centre, until Oct. 2.
- \* Works by Khelif Mahmoud Khelif at Hamourabi Art Gallery, Gardens Street, until Oct. 2 (Tel. 5536098).
- \* Paintings exhibition entitled "La Radioactive" at the French Cultural Centre, until Sept. 30.
- \* Paintings by Palestinian artists entitled "Palestine the Reality and the Dream" at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts, until Oct. 2 (except Tuesdays).

## International elderly awareness day to be observed in Kingdom for first time

By Nadia Mukhlis  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — "The Elderly People's Day" is to be celebrated on Oct. 2 in Jordan for the first time, under the title of "Society for All Age Groups."

This act was a result of the international interest in elderly people's welfare and the necessity of their inclusion in society, since they represent an active and important element in all societies, Mr. Bana explained.

"Such actions are important to draw awareness to the need for comprehensive development in society and to find the correct means of providing a good standard of living, along with security and medical care for the elderly," he added.

The ministry aims to make use of such public events to draw attention to and improve the feeling of responsibility toward elderly people in society and show that each citizen is responsible for developing a country conscious of humanitarian issues, he said.

The Ministry of Social Development has opened various charity committees, houses, and associations specialised for the elderly, since it is the sole source for granting such permission and approving leases, he said.

"The ministry gives permission after examining the place and finding it appropriate for residency," Mr. Bana explained.

"However," he added "the ministry cannot provide

shelter to all the elderly but rather offers places to those in desperate need by transferring them to charity committees and spending JD54,000 annually to help meet their requirements."

Today, seven social committees are responsible for the elderly in the Kingdom. They can accommodate around 350 people and are assisting approximately 160 now, he said.

"Islam discusses the importance of caring for aged parents in several Qu'ranic verses," Mr. Bana said.

The scheduled lectures are to include speeches by the minister of social development and elderly committees in Jordan, he concluded.

## Workshop to provide family planning project management skills

AMMAN (J.T.) — The National Population Commission, in cooperation with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), will conduct a workshop entitled "Project Cycle Management" through Oct. 2, according to a JICA press release.

The workshop aims to enhance the efficiency of the participants in management and implementation of the project entitled "Integrated Family Planning and Women in Development at Southern Ghor District/Karak Governorate," the statement continued.

This project is one of the activities planned according to the guidelines of the technical assistance from the government of Japan to Jordan. The National Population Commission, the

Queen Alia Fund, and the Ministry of Health are the responsible parties for the implementation of the three-year project, according to the announcement.

The project aims to: — reduce natural population growth rate through the promotion of reproductive health and women in development programmes.

— increase women's awareness in relation to health, reproductive health, and socio-economic participation;

— improve provision of health and family planning services, and

— improve the standard of living of women and their families through training, job opportunities, and economic activities, the statement concluded.

## Ceremony reopens Amman Odium

By Nadia Mukhlis  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The odium (amphitheatre) in Amman's city centre was opened last week, on the occasion of International Tourism Day, by Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Akel Biltaji.

He stated that this amphitheatre was chosen to be renovated for its historical and touristic importance, since "tourism in Jordan depends heavily on ancient sites."

Odium, in Latin, means a small amphitheatre or musical court, usually with a wooden roof, which was used in ancient times to recite poetry and perform musical events.

The Amman Odium dates to the second century.

The national conservatory band from Noor Al Hussein Foundation performed national and international music at the opening ceremony, highlighting the reopening of the amphitheatre, Omar Shawbaki, an

official in the public affairs department at the ministry said.

The general compound has three main entrances, located in the northern, southern, and eastern sides, that lead to the main building, which includes a wooden stage, the limestone amphitheatre, and the rose-shaped orchestra.

Renovations started in 1973 under the direction of the Antiquities Department. Work continued until 1996 and all works were done by Jordanian expertise.

The dating of the odium is provided by the antiquities found in the foundations. Its date relates it to the époque of Roman buildings in Jerash.

A coin was found in the amphitheatre that dates to the Nabataean King, Hareth the Fourth (9 BC-40 AD).

Several ministers and ambassadors attended the event at the odium, which is now open to the public, Mr. Shawbaki stated.



## Bystanders hamper search at Indonesian crash site

BUAH NADAR, Indonesia (R) — Rescue workers Sunday searched through tangled wreckage for the flight recorder of an Indonesian Airbus that reported heavy smoke haze before it crashed in northern Sumatra with the loss of all 234 people aboard.

An air force official said the remains of the 222 passengers and 12 crew had been removed from the A300-B4 jetliner that Friday smashed into a deep ravine at the hillside banana and palm plantation 45 kilometres south of Medan on a flight from Jakarta.

The official Antara news agency said 123 bodies had been identified.

An official with the aircraft accident commission at the site said hundreds of local people who had clambered down mud paths to see the wreckage were hampering the search.

"We are still searching for the black box and because of that, we cannot make any assumption as to the cause of the crash yet," he said.

But he complained that dozens of soldiers at the site were standing by and failing to clear away bystanders, some of whom had climbed onto the broken tail of the airplane, which still showed the logo of the Garuda Airline.

"What can I say, we can't ask them to leave. There are dozens of soldiers here but they don't do anything to ask the people to leave," said the official, who asked not to be named.

One local woman said: "I am dead tired but I want to see what happened."

A Garuda official said searchers were still finding parts of bodies at the site amid lush tropical vegetation.

Medan was blanketed by smog Sunday as a special Garuda Airline Boeing 747-200 flight arrived shortly after dawn with about 200 relatives of victims of the country's worst-ever air disaster. Haze was thin over the crash area, however.

Garuda expressed condolences over the loud speaker system to grieving relatives before the jet left Jakarta. It had been delayed for 24 hours by smog that closed Medan Airport Saturday. Residents said visibility had been a few metres.

Journalists said the relatives seemed to accept the tragedy as an act of God. None had shown any inclination to sue the government or airline.

Bush fires mainly in Sumatra and Kalimantan on the Indonesian portion of Borneo Island have sent a choking, health-threatening smog over neighbouring Singapore, Malaysia and Brunei and as far as Thailand and the Philippines in what experts have called an environmental disaster.

The smog will be one of the factors examined in an inquiry into the crash, but other Garuda pilots expressed scepticism that the haze would have been a prime cause.

The veteran pilot of the Airbus told the Medan control tower he was flying through smoky haze on his approach to the city's Polonia International Airport. Antara had reported. But the air force official in Medan said: "It is still too early to say if haze is behind the accident."

"Haze is an ordinary thing for pilots," said Shadrach Nababan, the head of the Garuda Indonesia Communications Forum for Pilots. "There are instruments in the plane and on the ground which can be used."

Said another pilot: "It is obvious the plane was flying too low and had left its flight path. As far as I can see, there could be two reasons: He was ordered to fly the air traffic control or there were visual reasons. But we don't know yet."

Antara quoted Transport Minister Haryanto Dhanitirto as clarifying comments Friday that the airplane had been too low.

"Whether the plane flew low because of the pilot, or because of instructions from air traffic control, or because of engine trouble — all are still being investigated. That will be looked at by the independent investigation team," he said.

The remains of those aboard the crashed Airbus were taken in military trucks to the Adam Malik Hospital in Medan, the capital of North Sumatra.

The unidentified victims were laid in wooden coffins covered with black plastic in a parking lot at the back of

the hospital.

In many cases, relatives sought to identify loved ones from pieces of clothing.

Coffins containing bodies of identified victims were taken to a community hall adjacent to the airport. Wreaths were laid along a low stage at one end of the hall.

Officials had opened sacks of ground coffee and strewn it over the floor to fight the smell of decomposition. Some of the bodies were wrapped in white cloth, while others were still shrouded in black plastic.

Officials in Medan suggested the unidentified victims might be buried alongside another mass grave containing 62 people who died in a plane crash in 1979. It was not immediately known when the funeral would be held.

The Italian embassy in Jakarta said the victims included a couple from Bologna on their honeymoon. The British embassy said two Britons were aboard.

Antara reported six Japanese, four Germans, two Americans, a Belgian and possibly six Taiwanese also on the plane.

The news agency quoted a member of the forensic team at Adam Malik Hospital as saying there were two "strange" corpses, and suggested they might have been stowaways or people killed on the ground.

It was not clear if this would raise the overall toll.

Rescue workers remove the plastic-shrouded body of a victim from the Garuda Indonesia Airbus crash near Medan, northern Indonesia. All 234 passengers on board the flight, flying from Jakarta to Medan, were killed as the plane crashed into a 500-metre ravine as it approached the airport through poor visibility (Reuters photo)



Rescue workers remove the plastic-shrouded body of a victim from the Garuda Indonesia Airbus crash near Medan, northern Indonesia. All 234 passengers on board the flight, flying from Jakarta to Medan, were killed as the plane crashed into a 500-metre ravine as it approached the airport through poor visibility (Reuters photo)

## Indonesian quake death toll rises to 12

JAKARTA (R) — At least 12 people were killed by collapsing buildings Sunday when an earthquake measuring 6.0 on the Richter scale struck the Indonesian island of Sulawesi, police said.

The earthquake occurred around 9:38 a.m. (0138 GMT) and was centred about 20 kilometres north of the town of Parepare, an official in the Jakarta office of the meteorological and geophysics agency (BMG) said.

The earthquake's epicentre was thought to be on land around the town of Pinrang, about 175 kilometres north of the south Sulawesi provincial capital of Ujung Pandang.

"Seven people were killed in Parepare and five in Pinrang with 22 injured," Parepare regional Police Chief Colonel Toto Suwali told Reuters by telephone.

"There are a number of serious injuries so there is a possibility the death toll could rise. We are also still waiting for reports from some other areas," Col. Suwali said.

A local military official in Pinrang earlier told Reuters that seven people had died in his sub-district. He said these included five people who died after being taken to a local hospital with injuries and two in their homes.

The discrepancy could not be immediately explained.

Col. Suwali said 22 buildings and six vehicles had been destroyed in the town by the earthquake, adding a number of minor aftershocks had been felt in Parepare.

A senior military officer, speaking from Parepare, said it appeared the earthquake damage was centred on Pinrang, but authorities were still waiting for reports to come in from outlying areas.

"The tremor this morning lasted for about 30 seconds," the officer said.

The Hong Kong observatory had earlier recorded an earthquake measuring 5.7 on the open-ended Richter scale on earthquake-prone Sulawesi.

Pinrang is a lowland town set back from the Makassar strait near the mountainous districts that form Indonesia's key cocoa-growing areas, as well being on the road to the spectacular mountain valleys and peaks in the Tanah Toraja area further north.

The quake added to the list of disasters to hit Indonesia recently.

Two days ago an Airbus passenger jet owned by the national airline Garuda crashed near the city of Medan on the island of Sumatra, killing 234 people.

The country is also struggling to bring under control hundreds of forest fires which have blanketed much of South East Asia in smog.

## Italian quake victims spend 2nd night outdoors

ROME (AFP) — Thousands of people spent a second night outdoors after Friday's earthquake in central Italy that left 11 people dead and caused more than \$450 million worth of damage to homes, churches and art treasures.

Several towns became huge open-air dormitories as thousands of people shaken by the two powerful quakes opted for the safety of the night sky as aftershocks continued to jolt the region.

The Italian daily La Stampa said around 20,000 people had been evacuated from the hardest-hit areas, but rescue officials put the number of homeless at no more than 5,000.

They said 126 people were continuing to receive treatment at hospital in Umbria and the Marche.

Late Saturday the Italian government declared a state

of emergency in the region to allow the release of emergency funds for rescue and rehabilitation work.

Seven thousand emergency beds were set up in the region on Friday night, rather fewer than the 11,780 initially planned, but they hoped to have 15,000 beds in place by Sunday night.

Authorities in the village of Fabriano complained of the delay in the provision of relief. They said no mobile homes had been made available although 2,000 busses had been rendered uninhabitable, and that 1,200 people had to spend the night outside in temperatures which, on the high ground, fell almost to freezing.

In the town of Nocera, around 6,000 people had to sleep in tents, cars or the few mobile homes provided by rescue officials.

Aftershocks continued to

ripple through the region overnight Saturday, some measuring above 3.0 on the Richter scale, though no casualties were reported.

A 78-year-old woman died early Sunday near Macerata but doctors said her death could not be directly attributed to the tremors.

The government estimated the cost of the damage caused by the earthquakes at more than 800 billion lire (\$457 million) and said that at least 1,200 major historic monuments had been damaged.

Ministers have ordered an immediate 56 billion lire to be allocated in relief for the Umbria and Marche regions.

Concern has focused on the situation in the town of Assisi, home of the renowned Basilica of Saint Francis and its priceless 13th and 14th century fres-

coes which are feared to have suffered severe damage. Experts are divided over the precise extent of the damage to the frescoes.

The basilica has been closed along with all other churches in the town, and local authorities were warning tourists to stay away.

According to an official estimate, between 35 and 40 per cent of buildings in the old town are no longer inhabitable.

Fund-raising operations got under way throughout Italy, with the state postal service launching a campaign in favour of the victims of the quake and the Fiorentina football team donating the takings for Sunday's games to the fund.

Several humanitarian organisations including the Italian Red Cross have offered to distribute free meals to evacuees.

## Bangladesh flies relief to cyclone victims

DHAKA (R) — Bangladesh Sunday said it was flying in relief supplies for thousands of people left homeless by the cyclone that tore across islands in the Bay of Bengal, killing 47 people and devastating large areas.

Officials said nearly 1,000 people still were missing and huge areas of crops had been damaged from Saturday's storm, which slammed the country's coast and small islands in the bay with 150-kph winds.

Fishermen's Association officials said some 50 trawlers with more than 700 people on board had yet to return from the turbulent sea.

Twenty-nine of the deaths from the storm were reported in the southern coastal district of Bhola, where the official BSS news agency said 15 other people were missing.

"Up to 30 per cent of standing crops were damaged in Comapanganj and Noakhali districts, while 10 per cent of the crops were damaged in Chittagong," said Sakawat Hossain, deputy commissioner of the port city of Chittagong.

Officials at the Cyclone Preparedness Centre in Chittagong said at least 900 people were injured in Bhola district alone.

Authorities in Bhola district said the storm triggered a five-foot (1.5-metre) tidal surge that destroyed 80 per cent of the houses, uprooted trees and snapped power and phone lines.

Most of the deaths were caused by drowning, including three people on a small boat that sank near the coast at Char Borhanuddin.

But relief ministry officials said Bangladesh would not seek foreign help for cyclone victims or for the economic losses.

"We are now capable to face this type of challenge from our own resources. We are now assessing the economic losses caused by the cyclone," said Relief Ministry official, Kazi Barud-Doza.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was to fly to cyclone devastated coastal areas and islands Sunday, officials said.

Azharul Islam, senior director of the Bangladesh

Red Crescent Society (BRCS), said Sunday the organisation had sent food and clothes for 2,000 families as part of its immediate relief measures.

The BRCS would soon build homes for 1,000 families to replace those blown away by the cyclone, Mr. Islam said.

He said the society had built 4,500 houses after the May cyclone, which killed 111 people and caused damage estimated at five billion taka (\$112 million) in coastal areas.

Bangladesh's worst cyclone in memory killed at least 138,000 people in 1991, according to official figures.

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## Massive Taliban attack on opposition base repulsed

KABUL (AFP) — A massive Taliban offensive on the northern Afghan opposition stronghold of Mazar-e-Sharif has been repulsed amid the heaviest fighting around the city for weeks, sources said Sunday.

Independent sources reported that a major battle raged to the east and west of the dusty anti-Taliban alliance city base from late Saturday to the early hours of Sunday.

The sources added that attacking Taliban fighters gained no ground in the offensive, which coincided with the one year anniversary of the hardline Muslim militia's capture of the capital Kabul.

They said the intense battle — described as "the most powerful attack yet" — involved both heavy and light weapons, but eased in the early hours of the morning.

However the sources said Taliban fighters have maintained a stranglehold on the city, with positions to the east within 35 kilometres of the city and within 15 kilometres to the west.

No further details were immediately available, and the exact whereabouts of the frontlines have been difficult to establish.

Mazar-e-Sharif, situated 310 kilometres north of

Kabul, is the seat of the anti-Taliban alliance's shadow government and has been under Taliban attack for over three weeks.

Anti-Taliban forces include Shiite Muslim factions Hezb-e-Wahdat and Harakat-e-Islami, the ousted Kabul government and ethnic Uzbek fighters loyal to rival Uzbek warlord's Abdul Rashid Dostam or Abdul Malik.

The Taliban bold around two thirds of Afghanistan including the capital Kabul which they seized one year ago, and have imposed a strict interpretation of Islamic law on areas they control.

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## Canada probes India plane reports

TORONTO (R) — Canadian officials said Saturday that they were investigating reports that a Canadian aircraft was intercepted by the Indian Air Force over a sensitive area near the Indian-Pakistan border and forced to land at Bombay's domestic airport.

"The department is aware of news reports of a Canadian-registered aircraft that was detained by Indian authorities in Bombay," Canada's Foreign Affairs Department said in a statement Saturday.

The statement said the Canadian consulate in Bombay was investigating the matter and the department had no further comment.

An Indian defence official said earlier Saturday the challenger aircraft was not following its flight plan and was intercepted by Indian Air Force jet fighters.

The aircraft's eight passengers and three crew members were detained for questioning, the defence official said. Five of those aboard were Canadians and six were Chinese.

An official with Air Canada denied earlier reports that the detained aircraft belonged to the airline company.

"This is definitely not an Air Canada aircraft," airline spokesman John Reber said Saturday, adding the airline had no information on the aircraft's owner.

The challenger had taken off from Dubai and was to touch down in Bombay before flying on to New Delhi.

Indian police officials said the aircraft was flying over the western state of Gujarat when it was intercepted and diverted to Bombay's Santacruz Airport.

Gujarat borders Pakistan and its coastline is considered sensitive.

In December 1995 the authorities forced a Russian aircraft to land at Bombay on suspicion that it had been used to air drop arms into eastern India.

## Hong Kong's China-anointed lawmakers pass election law

HONG KONG (R) — Hong Kong's unelected parliament Sunday passed an election law that critics say curtails democracy in the former British colony.

Pro-democracy activists in Hong Kong immediately protested the move and demanded the abolition of the China-appointed provisional legislature.

The Interim Assembly voted 29-9 with 11 abstentions early Sunday morning after an 18-hour debate on the bill, which set out next May's legislative council polls arrangements.

"We are now in a position to move forward in preparing for the elections to be held in May next year," Secretary for Constitutional Affairs Michael Suen told reporters after the marathon session.

Under the new law, 30 of 60 seats in the legislature will be returned by 30 business and professional groups known as "functional constituencies," which effectively means voting by companies.

Some two million people who voted in this category in the last election in 1995 will lose their vote, with only 200,000 people eligible to participate.

Another one-third of the seats will be returned by proportional representation, and the remaining 10 will be elected by an 800-member college of pro-China groups.

Hong Kong's Popular Democratic Party blasted the new law, proposed by China-appointed leader Tung Chee-Hwa, as undemocratic and unfair.

"We are in principle against the new rules because it is not democratic. It is also not going to be a fair election," ousted Democratic Party legislator Lee Wing-Tat said by telephone.

However, Mr. Lee added that the Democratic Party would still participate in next May's election, the first to be held under Chinese rule, in the hope that the Hong Kong residents would support them.

Analysts and pro-democracy activists in Hong Kong have said that the new electoral rules are intended to squeeze out the Democrats, who were the biggest winners in the last legislative polls in 1995, taking 19 out of 60 seats.

The Democrats and six independent pro-democracy legislators were ousted from office when China installed the interim chamber after Britain returned Hong Kong back to Beijing on July 1.

Mr. Lee also accused some members of the provisional chamber for expanding the constituencies in certain functional groups for their own political gains.

He said the enlarged groups mostly back pro-China parties, and that it would benefit them over the Democrats and other pro-democracy groups.

But political commentator Andy Ho said there would be a popular backlash against the democratic alliance for the betterment of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong progressive alliance, who amended the law to include some groups for certain functional constituencies.

"What they have done will not boost their credibility. It will only hurt their reputation," Mr. Ho said.

## Atlantis docking

There is a lot of excitement in the space station since May 1991.

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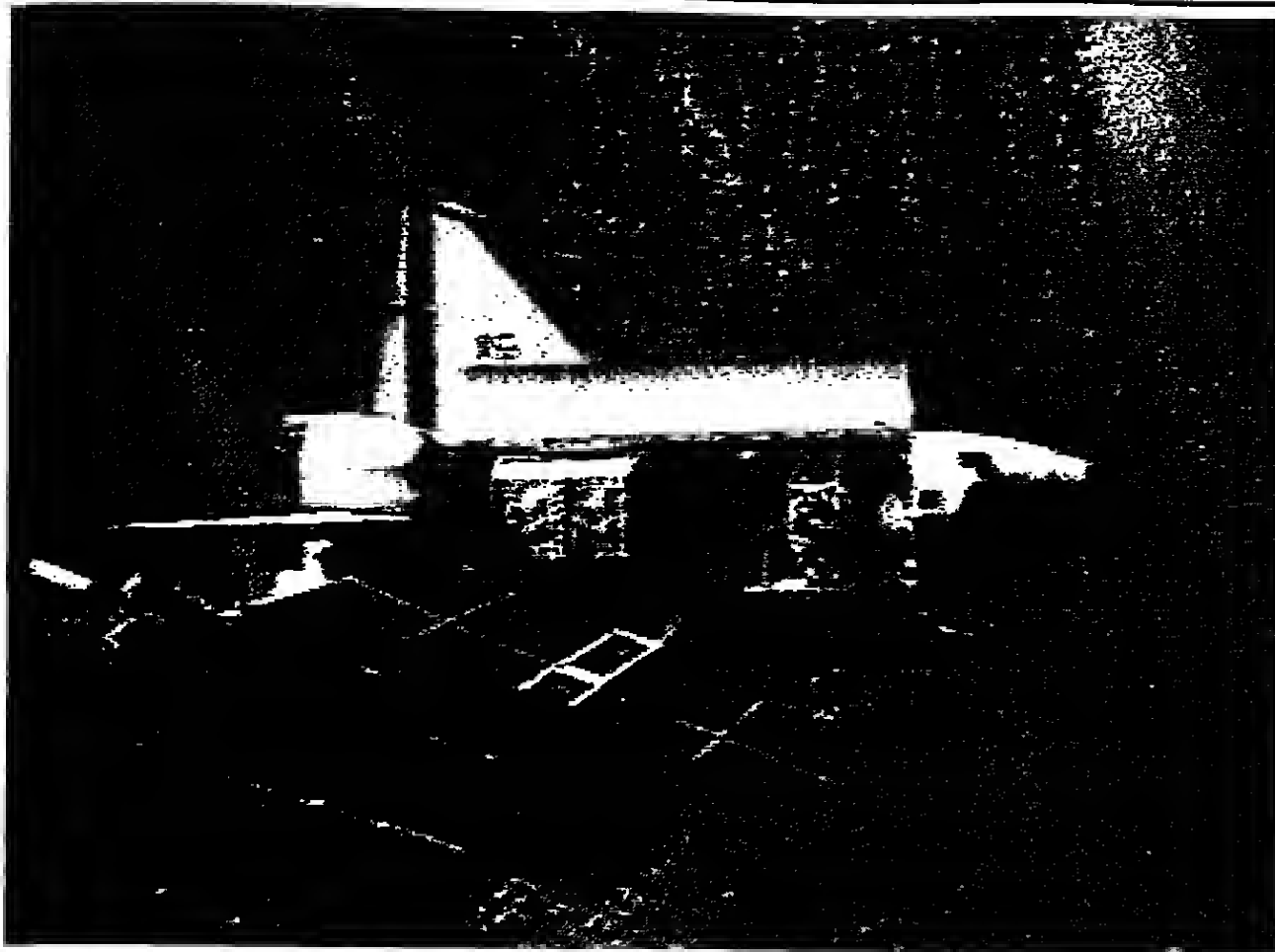
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U.S. space shuttle Atlantis approaches Russian Mir space station for docking. After the link-up with Atlantis, NASA Astronaut David Wolf was due to enter Mir in a controversial exchange with British-born Michael Foale, who has been on the space station since May (Reuters photo)

## Atlantis docking throws Mir a new life-line

MOSCOW (AFP) — The U.S. shuttle Atlantis successfully completed a delicate docking operation with Mir at the weekend, bringing fresh supplies and a new computer to the ageing Russian space station whose technical problems had thrown the mission into doubt.

Atlantis linked-up with the accident-prone troubled Russian space station at 1958 GMT Saturday, marking the start of a six-day joint mission and handing U.S.-Russian space cooperation a much-needed lifeline.

"We've got it. Houston," Atlantis Commander Jim Wetherbee told NASA officials in Texas after completing the manual docking operation, which took place some 380 kilometres above central Europe.

Mir's unreliable main computer showed no signs of repeating Monday's breakdown which had sparked renewed U.S. criticism of the 11-year-old space station's safety and put NASA under intense pressure to postpone the Atlantis launch-off.

In a sign of just how vital the new computer is, Atlantis Commander Jim Wetherbee appeared through the hatch connecting the two vehicles, giving his Russian counterpart Anatoly Solov'yov a solid handshake and the new computer.

"There are other presents, too," said a smiling Wetherbee as members of both crews laughed.

Mir's central computer keeps the station's solar panels facing the sun, enabling it to draw power and keep the vessel stationary, vital if the complex docking operation is to take place safely while the craft are travelling at around 28,000 kilometres per hour.

A collision following a botched docking procedure with an unmanned cargo craft in June almost ended in catastrophe, as Mir's crew scrambled to seal-off the damaged Spektr science module in order to save the entire space station.

After sleep the crews will start transferring the 2.5 tonnes of equipment, food, water and supplies from Atlantis to Mir. All together the two vessels will exchange eight tonnes of material.

Russian ground control spokesman Valery Lindin said the replacement of Mir's main computer "should be completed before Atlantis leaves Friday." A second computer will leave for Mir aboard a Russian supply craft next Sunday, the day Atlantis returns to Earth, he said.

The trouble-free docking was a relief to Russian space officials, who said

Saturday's rendezvous had put U.S.-Russian cooperation on international space station Alpha back on track.

"An important stage has taken place in the programme aimed at creating the Alpha station," said Yuri Koptev, director general of the Russian Space Agency, cited by Mr. Lindin.

"This will allow the entire U.S.-Russian scientific programme aboard the station to be back on stream in two to three months," Mr. Koptev added.

A successful mission is vital to relieve pressure on NASA to end links with the cash-strapped Russian space programme, which is receiving \$473 million from NASA over five years for the right to keep a U.S. astronaut aboard the only permanently manned space station.

The Mir crew greeted their Atlantis colleagues — including Russian Vladimir Titov and Jean-Loup Chrétien of France — with bread and salt, moving a traditional Russian welcome into orbit.

"You guys have really been doing a great job up here," Wetherbee told the Mir crew.

The main purpose of the mission is to allow astronaut David Wolf to replace his British-born colleague Michael Foale aboard Mir. Wolf, a 41-year-old physician who transfers to Mir

Sunday, is to remain on Mir for four months.

Foale, who has clocked up the second longest flight time for a U.S. astronaut since arriving on Mir May 18, will move to Atlantis and return to Earth with the shuttle next Sunday.

"I do actually want to go home," Foale said. "They've just been telling me how my son has grown up to twice the height that he was when I was on the Earth and I want to talk to him in person."

"There was a lot of discussions about the risks. We are here to tell you all 10 that we think the benefits are far above the risks," said Wetherbee in radio contact with the space centre in Houston.

Russian Vladimir Titov and American Scott Parazynski are to carry out a spacewalk to recover some of the scientific material deployed outside Mir last year. They will also place outside the space station a device that will be used to repair the Mir's damaged Spektr module.

During another spacewalk, the crews will also mend solar panels needed to restore full power to Mir. That will enable Mir to carry out the full programme of scientific experiments planned aboard the Spacehab which Atlantis is to deliver.

## Blast wrecks Bosnian Serb opposition newspaper office

BANJA LUKA (R) — An explosion ripped through the offices of the only opposition newspaper in the Bosnian Serb town of Doboj late Saturday night, a spokesman for the NATO-led peacekeeping force said Sunday.

The blast destroyed the offices of "Alternativa" and damaged several apartments before a fire broke out, threatening to spread to adjacent buildings. There were no injuries.

It was the second attack in a few weeks on the paper, owned and edited by retired Bosnian Serb Army Colonel Milovan Stankovic, an open supporter of Bosnian Serb President Biljana Plavsic in her power struggle against ultra-nationalist rivals.

The cause of the explosion was not immediately known but it was a sign that the conflict between Western-backed Ms. Plavsic and rivals loyal to indicted war

criminal Radovan Karadzic will continue despite recent agreements between the two sides.

The first attack on Alternativa was on August 28 when an unknown assailant opened fire with an automatic weapon at the journal's office and threw a hand grenade. The Doboj Socialist Party headquarters were also attacked on that day.

Col. Stankovic then accused the "hardline policy of the authorities loyal to Pale" of staging the attack.

Col. Stankovic is a member of the board of the Socialist Party, close to Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic's socialists in Serbia.

Karadzic's Serb Democratic Party is expected to lose votes in the municipal elections held two weeks ago to two rival Serb parties — the Socialists and the Radical Party.

Meanwhile, Ms. Plavsic Saturday publicly accused Karadzic, of withdrawing millions of marks from bank accounts in Bosnia.

Ms. Plavsic has used accusations of corruption and profiteering to try to undermine support for Karadzic and his hardline allies who still wield extensive power in the Serb-controlled part of Bosnia and oppose the Dayton peace accord.

Speaking on Bosnian Serb television, Ms. Plavsic said she did not know whether Karadzic was still at his base in the mountain village of Pale, just outside Sarajevo.

"But I know for sure that he took 32 million German marks (\$18.2 million) from a Banja Luka bank on March 11," she said. "I also know that about 17 million German marks were transferred from a Banja Luka bank to some Italian bank in his

name in April."

"I do not know if Karadzic is still in (the Bosnian Serb republic) or not," Ms. Plavsic repeated.

Last July NATO-led troops pounced on two Serbs wanted for war crimes by the international tribunal in the Hague.

Rumours swirling for the umpteenth time that the peacekeepers might swoop on the biggest prize — Karadzic — have prompted several foreign news organisations to fly in reporters, now camping in Pale.

Such an operation would be dangerous and risk provoking retaliation against the peacekeepers from many hardline Serbs. Officials said it was unlikely Karadzic would be arrested in a military operation under the eyes of the world's media, and it was not clear if he was even in Pale at present.

## Minister says N. Irish talks could be over by Christmas

LONDON (R) — Northern Ireland's peace talks could be wrapped up by Christmas if the province's parties are determined enough, Britain's Northern Ireland Secretary Mo Mowlam said Sunday.

"We could do it by Christmas if people really wanted to it, if there was determination and we could build that trust and confidence quick enough which is the problem — getting people to trust each other and talk," she said.

Prime Minister Tony Blair has set next May as the deadline for reaching a settlement on one of the most intractable guerrilla conflicts of the 20th century.

Parties split by conflicting loyalties to Britain and Ireland will this week start thrashing out new ways of living together and leaving their troubled past behind.

Leaders of Protestant unionism and Catholic nationalism are poised for the most important round-table talks since partition of the island of Ireland in 1921 left northern Ireland under British rule.

Ms. Mowlam, speaking to BBC Radio, warned of tough times ahead after 16 gruelling months trying to get arch-foes together for talks.

"It is going to be harder now than it has been in the past months," she said. "It is now in many senses in the hands of the parties. It is the parties who can now make this work."

The parties are due Monday to map out their negotiating programme for the ground-breaking talks, which will then begin in earnest Tuesday.

## Burma's opposition eyes past struggles, future plans

RANGOON (AFP) — Burma's opposition National League for Democracy took stock Sunday of a nine-year struggle against the country's ruling junta and looked to the future with plans for its youth wing.

The second and final day of the NLD congress resumed with more than 700 delegates in attendance after the military's State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), in a surprise move, gave its consent to the meeting.

Sunday's agenda was dominated by two political papers, the first of which looked back on the party's trials and tribulations since it was set up in 1988 amid nationwide demonstrations against the previous military government.

In the same year, SLORC took power in a bloody crackdown on pro-democracy protesters in which thousands were killed.

## Charles to fulfill Diana's South African promise

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — Prince Charles and Earl Spencer have put aside their differences to give Prince Harry the South African holiday his mother, Princess Diana, had promised him, the Johannesburg Sunday Times said.

Prince Charles, Diana's former husband, and Earl Spencer, her brother who lives in Cape Town, will accompany 13-year-old Harry to a game reserve in Eastern Cape province next month, honouring a promise made by Diana before her death, the report said.

The Shamwari Game Reserve, near the south coast city of Port Elizabeth, is the location for the feature film "Mambo," which Diana and her companion, Dodi Fayed, were reportedly planning to back.

The \$60 million movie revolves around an elephant which leads its herd through fields of landmines in a war-torn part of Africa and has been dubbed "a Free Willy with tusks."

The script reflects both the princess's hatred of landmines and her passionate opposition to the ivory trade. The movie was to have carried her name as co-producer.

Her involvement in the film and her promise to take her sons to the reserve ended with her death in a car crash in Paris on Aug. 31.

The Sunday Times said plans to fulfil the princess's pledge were discussed by Earl Spencer and Prince Charles shortly after Diana's funeral, during which the earl said his family will play a key role in bringing up the two princes.

The report said Prince Harry will be joined by his father and Earl Spencer at the Shamwari Reserve, a sanctuary for the survivors of five generations of elephants culled for the ivory trade, on Oct. 29 for a two-day visit.

Also on Prince Charles' agenda for his five-day South African visit is a dinner with President Nelson Mandela and a Spice Girls concert in Johannesburg.

A Buckingham Palace spokesman said details of the itinerary had not yet been finalised and would be released later. The Sunday Times said the royal party will fly from London on a British Airways flight on Oct. 28 to Cape Town, where they will stay at Earl Spencer's luxury estate in the upmarket suburb of Constantia, before departing the next day for Port Elizabeth.

## Blair's popularity soars to 93 per cent — poll

LONDON (R) — Prime Minister Tony Blair's popularity rating has soared to 93 per cent on the eve of his first Labour Party conference since sweeping to power in a May day election landslide, according to a private party poll reported by the Independent Sunday newspaper.

The figure was thought to be a record for any democratic politician but aides were quick to squash any triumphalism or complacency.

After 18 years in the political wilderness, Labour has set its sights on at least two five-year terms in office to revolutionise Britain.

Mr. Blair, who has a thumping 178-seat majority in the 659-strong parliament, told readers in the tabloid News of the World: "At last we can stop talking and start doing things that will change your lives for the better."

He insisted that one of the biggest changes Labour had wrought was the way Britain was seen abroad after almost two decades of Conservative government resistance to greater European integration.

"By being constructive in Europe, we have started to get our own way," he wrote on the eve of the conference in the southern English seaside resort of Brighton.

The Sunday Telegraph said that Mr. Blair was planning to take a huge political gamble by calling a snap referendum on Britain's entry into the European single currency.

But Finance Minister Gordon Brown, trying to quell fevered speculation on the financial markets, denied that Britain was

now more likely to join the currency.

"Our position has not changed," the chancellor of the exchequer told the Sunday Times in an interview.

Share prices soared in London and the pound tumbled after Friday's Financial Times quoted an unnamed minister as saying the government would soon make a statement on joining Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) shortly after its 1999 launch.

The Labour government has insisted Britain is highly unlikely to join the single currency quickly and Mr. Brown showed no sign in the interview of straying from the official line.

"The government's line on EMU is as it has always been. These speculative stories keep appearing," Mr. Brown said.

Mr. Blair, who very narrowly won voter approval to bring Wales its own national assembly, could risk a major reversal over the emotive issue of Europe that caused such division among the Conservatives.

A weekend Gallup poll showed that 57 per cent of Britons wanted their country to retain its pound even if other European states went ahead with a single currency in 1999.

For as the Sunday Telegraph said, Mr. Blair must declare his hand on the currency in "perhaps the most politically perilous decision to be taken by a prime minister since Margaret Thatcher (in 1982) sent the task force to reclaim the Falklands (from Argentina)."

## Diana's mother pays emotion-charged tribute

LONDON (R) — Princess Diana's mother paid an emotion-charged tribute to her daughter Saturday and said thank you for the 15,000 letters of condolence she has received from around the world.

Frances Shand Kydd disclosed that the day after Diana's funeral she rowed out alone to the island where she was buried and "I felt certain that my beloved Diana was at peace and I was peaceful too."

Speaking to the congregation at the Scottish Cathedral of Oban where she worships, she said she drew comfort from the huge crowds who gathered spontaneously outside Diana's London home.

"I spent hours during the nights in the grounds of Kensington Palace witnessing the thousands of people so thoughtfully choosing where to put their flowers and light their candles, seeing tears pouring down the faces of people of every age and race and creed."

"The hugs I was given and so many people saying to me 'thank you for giving us Diana and thank you for being with us tonight.' I felt indescribable comfort in a warm protective mantle."

Diana was killed with her millionaire companion Dodi Fayed on Aug. 31 in Paris after a car chase with paparazzi photographers.

Mrs. Shand Kydd spoke poignantly to her 500 fellow worshippers about how she was coming to terms with the loss of her daughter, the world's most photographed woman who became an icon of compassion for her charity work.

"I know that grief has no agenda and no timetable. I also know that the ache will never go. But there will be gentler and kinder days. And although my life will never be the same again, it will still be good," she said.

Diana's brother, Earl Spencer, angrily accused the media of having "blood on their hands" and said his sister was "the most hunted person on earth."

Mrs. Shand Kydd said many of the articles written about her relationship with her famous daughter were based on no knowledge and no facts.

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Frances Shand Kydd arrives at St. Columba's Cathedral in Oban for a special memorial mass for her daughter Diana, Princess of Wales (Reuters photo)

"Such pieces made us both wince but also gave us joy that we so often met in many different places without anyone ever knowing. A sense of joy that we did it and no one ever knew," she said.

She said Diana would telephone from all over the world at all times of the day

and night. The calls were rich in humour, she recalled.

But she said she would not reveal her innermost thoughts about the agony of losing her daughter.

"My treasured memories of her last days are not for sharing, they remain zipped up in my heart and mind."

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# News

## Prince Hassan says Kingdom will continue pushing peace forward to regain Arab rights

(Continued from page 1)

My visit coincided with a meeting in Cairo of the Arab foreign ministers which was chaired by Prince Saud Al Faisal. I conveyed a message of affection from His Majesty King Hussein to his brother King Fahd. The visit was a new move towards strengthening bilateral relations.

Q: What is the outcome of the latest contacts between Jordan and Kuwait?

A: I believe relations are heading towards normalcy between the Gulf states and us in general. I sent a letter to the Kuwaiti crown prince as part of the gradual restoration of relations between the two countries. This is quite understood following the crisis resulting from the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. I think we have to be frank as a first step from preceding reconciliation. I hope there will be meetings between Kuwaitis and Jordanians soon. Jordan's stand is clear and I would like to stress our concern over the fate of our brothers in Kuwait, particularly those who are in prison.

Q: Can Jordan play a role in solving the prisoners problem?

A: Over the past years, we have been seeking a solution to this problem and to arrive at a final settlement.

Q: What is the nature of Jordan's relations with Syria?

A: We maintain natural relations with Syria in the light of the present circumstances. Relations between King Hussein and President Assad are based on mutual respect. We consult with each other. We seek a comprehensive solution to the Middle East issue (including) to guarantee Israeli withdrawal from the Golan and Lebanon and the implementation of U.N. resolutions. These are principled stands. If we want to achieve comprehensive peace, it is natural for us to maintain consultations between Syria and Jordan.

Q: What are the dimensions of the recent attack on the Israeli embassy officials?

A: It was a criminal attack. The state shoulders its responsibility of playing host to diplomats of different nationalities. We condemn such attacks and we condemn violence. We ourselves fell victims to terrorism in the past. The general situation in the area should not be an excuse for the return of the cycle of violence. The attack was an act of outlaws which we deplore and the perpetrators will be punished.

Q: Who do you think stands behind the attack?

A: The media normally tries to exploit such events, but once again I have to say that there are groups here and there in the Arab World, and the world at large, which try to take advantage of certain situations. The political situation in our region is tempting such groups to commit such acts. Some might say that such acts coincide with renewed efforts towards peace, especially in the wake of a visit by U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, whose trip can be described as positive.

itive. We must stress that Jordan adopts a clear stand against these acts.

Q: People blame Netanyahu for the terrorist acts, what do you say?

A: I must say that violence has appeared not only on the Arab side. Illegal groups have been in the region since 1948. But these groups were later gathered into what is now known as Israel's defence forces. In Palestine also there were different movements which formed the Palestine Liberation Organisation. Violence can be seen in Israel's continued occupation of Arab lands, the demolition of Arab homes and the building of settlements in the Arab territories. However, we cannot ruin the last chance we have to achieve peace, especially in view of the interest in peace on the part of Europe, Russia and the United States. We must neither allow passions to take control nor allow outlaws to have the upper hand. If Netanyahu is the cause of all these acts, we must not give him further justification to refrain from honouring the commitments towards peace.

Q: How long will it take us to reestablish normal relations with the Israelis?

A: There is a difference between the stands and policies of Peres and Rabin on one hand and Netanyahu on the other, but I believe the majority of people in Jordan, Israel and Palestine are actually seeking an end to the nightmare. Although we are witnessing renewed acts of violence, we can see light at the end of the tunnel. I say once again that in the absence of inter-Arab consultations and a united Arab stand it is impossible to pass judgement on Israel in light of our inter-Arab relations and in light of our stands towards basic issues. Of course there are differences among Arabs but we have to be frank to each other about the way to reach a just peace.

Q: What do you think about King Hussein's suggestion that the Arabs are on the verge of catastrophe?

A: The 1948 and 1967 wars aimed at finding solutions to security issues through transferring refugees to the Arab countries. We are unable to absorb a new wave of refugees. Jordan is launching diplomatic efforts to rekindle hope and fend off danger. Of course the events are going on inside the occupied Arab territories but these events are causing us deep concern.

Q: Do you believe a war is coming?

A: Our region is witnessing various conflicts which might develop into a bigger war covering a wider area. Therefore, we must use our minds and conscience, intensify our contacts and consultations and increase our contacts with the outside world for the sake of attaining justice. We believe in the principle of exchanging land for peace. We demand the return of the spirit of the Madrid conference and the Madrid concept for a comprehensive peace. I believe that the U.S. has to listen to all parties.

Q: Should the U.S. change its policy?

A: I believe Madeleine Albright took a daring step by criticising Israeli unilateral policies which are aimed at changing the facts on the ground but she was criticised by both the Israeli and Arab media alike. I believe she should be given a chance to act because her visit was the first to the region.

Q: If we are not satisfied with Netanyahu why should we meet and talk to him?

A: It is difficult for any Arab ruler to say that he is happy with what is happening in the occupied territories or in the Arab World. Although we are not happy, we meet in order to work towards a solution and rekindle hope, not for ourselves as rulers but rather for the children and the generations to come. We have to admit that the Jews have worldwide influence in various institutions of the world including banks and other organisations. We have to use our minds and intensify our contacts and coordination during this stage until we reach a better situation.

Q: What do you think about Israeli-Turkish manoeuvres?

A: I have visited Turkey when Turkish forces were deep inside Iraqi territories where I heard Turkish officials saying that there is a political vacuum in northern Iraq, and as a result, there were 10,000 victims of the Kurdish Labour Party. We are for Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity and support the return of sovereignty to all parts of Iraq. That is what I said to Turkish officials. I hope Arab leaders will talk directly to Turkish leaders and listen to what they say.

Q: When do you think Arabs will reach economic integration?

A: In 1980 there was an economic summit in Amman and since then we have been hearing calls for Arab economic unity. Economic integration stems from will, and it is up to us, as responsible people, to discuss ways leading to integration. There are billions in Arab funds invested abroad and the Arab governments wish to have these funds invested in the Arab World. As to the Doha summit, as long as there is no coordination among the Arabs, nothing can be achieved. There are 80 countries taking part and we should not allow Israel to benefit exclusively from its contacts with these nations and serve its own interests.

Q: Would you interfere to ensure the participation of the Muslim Brotherhood in the coming elections?

A: In his tour, King Hussein expressed openly the government's readiness to open dialogue with all factions and groups in a democratic manner. I believe the government is ready to have a dialogue, but the elections will be held on schedule. However, we cannot discuss any changes at the moment concerning improvements (to laws, as demanded by the boycotting parties).

## Israel agrees to release funds, resume talks with Palestinians

(Continued from page 1)

Mr. Netanyahu suspended those talks after the July and September bombings here which left 20 Israelis dead and were claimed by Hamas, an opponent of the peace accords with Israel.

Israel's supreme court on Sunday rejected an appeal by the left-wing opposition demanding a halt to the construction of a Jewish settlement on the hilltop of Jabal Abu Ghneim in Arah east Jerusalem.

The start of work at Jabal Abu Ghneim in Arab east Jerusalem in mid-March plunged the Israeli-Palestinian peace process into its worst crisis since the interim accords were signed four years ago.

An MK with the left-wing Meretz Party, Abraham Poraz, had lodged an appeal against the construction of the settlement, saying it was discriminatory because Israel was building only for Jews.

Court spokesman Moshe Gorallli said the appeal was rejected because it was a political rather than legal issue, and the court refrains from judging government policies.

At least four appeals against the construction of the Jewish settlement in Jabal Abu Ghneim have already been rejected by the court.

But Mr. Poraz told Agence France Presse after the court ruling that "Israel must cease work at Har Homa (Jabal Abu Ghneim) while it does not respect its commitments to build for the town's Arab population."

The project on Jabal Abu Ghneim will provide 6,500 new settlement units for Jews.

In a bid to ease Palestinian and international condemnation of the settlement, Israel announced it would build around 1,000 homes for Arabs on a hill nearby, but the work has never commenced.

Since its occupation of Arab east Jerusalem in 1967, Israel has built 10 new Jewish settlements where around 160,000 Israelis now live.

Most recently, Mr. Netanyahu announced plans last week to build another 300 settlement units in the Efrat settlement near Bethlehem.

## Instrument allegedly used against Hamas leader, not found — Rashid

(Continued from page 1)

any citizen who might have seen the instrument [used in the attack] or know anything about it, to approach the authorities and reveal what he knows," the minister said.

The minister said that the two Canadians, whose names have not been revealed yet, are being detained by the security authorities and will remain in "custody" until interrogations are over.

He declined to reveal any information on the interrogation with the suspects.

Mr. Rashid was commenting on the attack against Mr. Misha'al by two Canadian "tourists" on Thursday.

Minister of State for Information Affairs Samir Mutawi confirmed Saturday that Mr. Misha'al was subjected to an "assault" by the two suspects.

Hamas accused the Israeli secret service, Mossad, of being behind the "operation," which came four days following an attack against two Israeli embassy employees, that was claimed by a previously unknown group in Lebanon.

The Israeli embassy in Jordan denied on Sunday that Israel was involved in an attack on the Hamas politburo chief.

"We deny. (We have) nothing to do with it," Israeli embassy spokesman Royce Gilad was quoted by Reuters as saying.

Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, who is currently visiting Amman, pointed a finger of blame abroad for last week's attack. Agence France Presse reported Sunday.

"Jordan does not accept any interference in its internal affairs, especially in matters of security, which is a sacred issue," Dr. Majali told reporters in the Omani capital, Muscat.

"We will not allow any party, whoever it may be, to play

around with the security of our country," Dr. Majali added.

The prime minister told the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) that investigation is continuing to unveil those who are behind the attack, "whether it was planned from foreign or local parties, or even if it happened accidentally."

Dr. Majali reaffirmed that no "instrument" has been found that "would support the allegation an electronic device that was used by the two Canadians during the assault."

A Hamas statement said the condition of Mr. Misha'al, who is being hospitalised at the KHMHC, was improving.

In his first statements to the press following the attack, Mr. Misha'al told the Arabic daily Al Ra'i on Sunday that he was not surprised by the "assault."

"He who has chosen our path should expect such things to happen," said Mr. Misha'al.

"This incident is an example of the failure of (Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin) Netanyahu's programme," he added.

"We will not retreat from our programme against Israeli occupation and we shall continue the resistance," the 41-year-old Palestinian said.

Mr. Misha'al, a father of seven children, confirmed in the statements he gave to the Arabic daily that the two assailants used a "strange device" against him.

"One of them approached me with the instrument in his hand and placed it close to my ears. I heard a click coming from that instrument," he added.

Hamas said the alleged instrument has emitted "rays" that affected the nervous system of Mr. Misha'al, who complained from "dizziness and imbalance" following the assault.

Abdullah Akayleh, a former Islamist member in the Lower House of Parliament, told the

Jordan Times that he talked by phone with His Majesty King Hussein on Friday and requested help in locating the alleged "instrument," which will speed up diagnosing the condition of Mr. Misha'al.

"The rays emitted by this instrument were aimed at the brain cells in order to kill him, not instantly, but while he is asleep," Dr. Akayleh said.

He said that all parties in Jordan condemn the attack "by the Israeli Mossad which is not merely against Mr. Misha'al but also against the sovereignty of the country with which they signed a peace treaty."

Former Chairman of the Jordan Doctors Association Ishaq Maraga, who visited Mr. Misha'al, said that the medical reports indicated that "the brain" of Mr. Misha'al was affected because of rays emitted from the "alleged instrument" used during the attack.

Dr. Maraga, a specialist in brain and nerve diseases, expected that the Hamas leader needs "few days or a week to fully recover."

The resistance group, which opposes any peacemaking with Israel, threatened that it will carry out anti-Israeli attacks abroad following the attempt against Mr. Misha'al.

"We call on our military branches to rally their forces and deliver a firm reply to this very serious crime," AFP quoted Hamas as saying.

"The attempt against the Zionist Mossad to assassinate our brother Khaled Misha'al, forces us to take our struggle against the Zionist enemy outside the frontier of our country (Palestine)," it added.

Hamas is "seriously studying how to reply to this serious crime with strong, sustained and direct blows to vital Israeli interests in different parts of the world... this is not terrorism but exercising a natural right," the statement said.

## Kingdom will not be turned into theatre for terrorist acts — King

(Continued from page 1)

Asked whether the government would still engage the opposition in a dialogue that aims at avoiding a boycott of the elections, the King said that the government did initiate the talks but the opposition was responsible for their interruption, because [opposition leaders] insisted that the talks would only involve them and not the rest of the political parties.

The King did not rule out a resumption of the dialogue and revealed that he was approached by the leader of the Communist Party, Yaqoub Zayadin, calling for an expanded meeting with the opposition.

"God willing we will meet [with them] soon," the King said.

However, the King emphasised that the Constitution was sacred and should not be touched and that the one-person, one-vote formula, which was approved by the outgoing Parliament, cannot be addressed unless a final solution to the Palestinian problem was reached.

Peace, a strategic option for Jordan, is also not an issue for discussion, he said.

The King said that he was deeply touched by the affection and warmth that Jordanians accorded him during his recent visits to governorates in the Kingdom.

Turning to the peace process, the King said that peace had enemies "here in Jordan, in

Israel and everywhere."

"But we will keep pursuing a comprehensive, just and honourable peace. I mean peace and not surrender," the King stressed.

Jordan will therefore continue to accord the Palestinians all the support possible until they gain their rights on their soil including the right to establish their own state, the King said.

He impressed on the need for the U.S. to be actively engaged and to play a leading role in the peace process.

"This was the gist of my message to the Cairo summit," which was held earlier this month between the King, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat.

"If the process failed and the enemies of peace won, the consequences would be devastating to everyone, the King warned.

"We will always stand in the face of anyone, state or leader, who intends to destroy peace," the King said, adding that relations with other Arab countries were always "at heart."

He said those relations were, as far as Jordan is concerned, at their best, and that consultations and contacts are continuing at all levels for strengthening the Arab Nation and its future generations.

The King referred to Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali's visits to a number of Arab states and the King's own contacts as falling within the purpose of enhancing Jordan's relations with those states.

## Iraq says sanctions have killed 1.2 million people

(Continued from page 1)

of the \$210 million Iraq has allocated for medical supplies under the deal has reached the country.

Mr. Muhsarak said before the sanctions Iraq used to import medicines worth \$500 million a year.

Now most of Baghdad's medical imports were from Jordan which had decreased to \$7 million this year from \$35 million a year after the sanctions were imposed, he added.

Mr. Muhsarak said many newly detected cases of serious infectious diseases were caused by uranium-covered bombs used by the U.S. and British forces during the 1991 Gulf war that evicted Iraqi forces from Kuwait.

"Now we are also detecting a large amount of cholera

and malaria which we had managed to eradicate," he said.

Spare parts are also lacking for water and sewerage systems and the health of the population has deteriorated because of shortage of chlorine for water purification.

Eric Falt, spokesman for the U.N. humanitarian office in Baghdad, told Reuters Sunday that some 49 chlorine gas cylinders had arrived in Iraq under the oil pact.

They are for water systems in central and southern Iraq, he said. "The quantity of chlorine gas that has arrived is sufficient to meet the needs of one million people for approximately 45 days," Mr. Falt said.

He said some 150 more cylinders were expected to reach Iraq in the next three weeks.

## PNA will hold new corruption inquiry

(Continued from page 1)

Mr. Qouriea also said the 88-member PLC, in which Fateh holds two-thirds of the seats, will meet

Wednesday to discuss a possible cabinet reshuffle.

"But this reshuffle will take place after a while because of the current political situation," Mr. Qouriea added.

PLC members demanded a cabinet reshuffle in July, after a parliamentary committee of inquiry reported findings of overall corruption and poor management in various ministries.

## Two teams of U.N. arms inspectors start mission

(Continued from page 1)

against Baghdad and said it would review the level of Iraq's cooperation in October.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Said Sahfar discussed ties with

UNSCOM in talks last week with his counterparts, including France's Hubert Vedrine, at the U.N. General Assembly in New York, the official news agency INA said.

Iraq has been under U.N. sanc-

tions since its 1990 invasion of Kuwait. The oil embargo cannot be lifted until UNSCOM certifies that Iraq's chemical, biological and nuclear weapons as well as long-range missiles have been eliminated.

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Music Box (7th Circle).

GI Rho Ma (Sweilheh).

تباع التذاكر لدى:

موكا كافيه

هارد روك كافيه

الاستقلال (الشيمساني)

المركز الثقافي الملكي

فريدي للموسيقى

بووكس أت كافيه

موزيك بوكس

جي روه ما (المصيفيه)

**Supporting Band**

**Black Iris**

**CRISTAL**

Radisson

**FLAT**

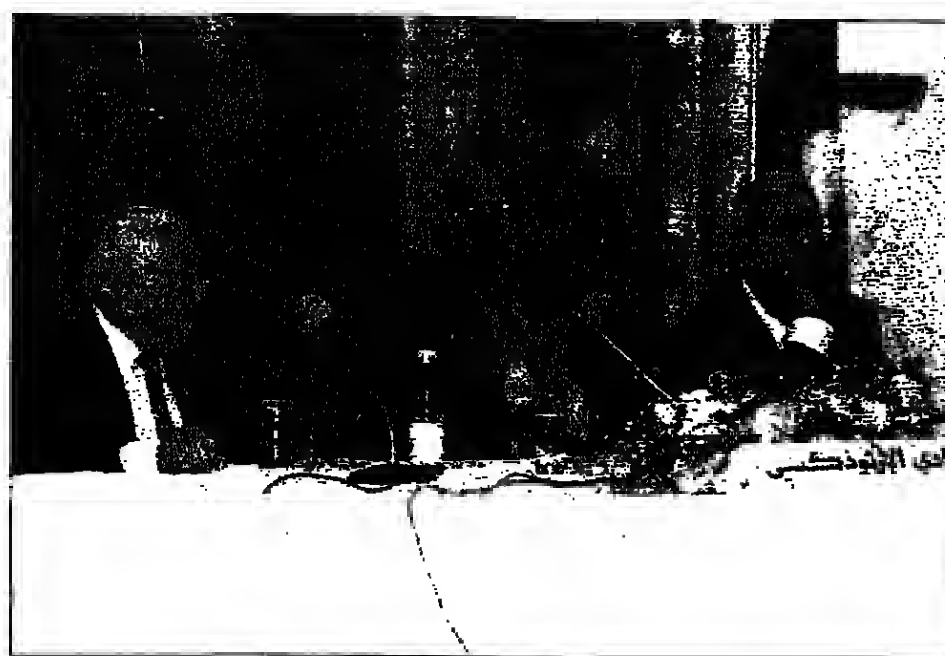
**Dajani Group**

**Hard Rock CAFE**





Audience listen to Deputy Prime Minister Jawad Anani (centre in right photo) delivering a speech on behalf of HRH Crown Prince Hassan



## Crown Prince: Water scarcity, energy are main challenges

AMMAN (J.T.) — Water scarcity in Jordan presents the country with an increasingly difficult and major challenge in view of the 3.2 per cent population growth, HRH Crown Prince Hassan has cautioned.

In an address delivered on his behalf by Deputy Prime Minister for Development Affairs and Minister of State for Prime Ministry Affairs Jawad Anani, the Crown Prince said the Kingdom's agricultural sector con-

sumes 70 per cent of total water resources, with domestic and industrial consumption estimates combine to use up the balance.

One solution to the problem, Prince Hassan suggested, is the recycling of treated wastewater, a process, an initially costly undertaking but feasible utilising modern technology.

Tackling the topic of Jordan's economic outlook,

Prince Hassan added that the Kingdom is facing another challenge, i.e., the rehabilitation of its human and energy resources and applying these assets in the arena of globalisation.

Noting the ever increasing cost of energy, the Crown Prince said plans to conserve on energy consumption and appropriate strategies to rehabilitate human resources for the coming century are a must.

Referring to Jordan's fuel

imports, specifically from Iraq, Prince Hassan said the present arrangement of land transport of Iraqi oil by truck is unsatisfactory and a more efficient means of obtaining oil and oil products will eventually become necessary.

Turning to emerging financial problems, he said the country's current financial difficulties are due largely to the decline in the amounts of taxes and customs fees and a reduction in

customs duty on imported goods will exacerbate the problem.

He stressed that economic restructuring help is urgently needed from major industrial nations particularly from Europe as well as from Arab funds in order to enable it to become self-reliant.

The Crown Prince also emphasised the importance of companies adjusting to the requirements of the World Trade Organisation

and the Jordanian-European partnership agreement, highlighting the significance of the observance of intellectual property rights, especially in the country's pharmaceutical sector.

Prince Hassan concluded his address, presented by Dr. Anani at the Orthodox Club, saying that the government is devising strategies for each ministry to attend to the nation's needs until the year 2010.

## Asia: World's largest, fastest growing market

LONDON (AFP) — Asia is by far the world's largest market, with a nearly 37 per cent share, ahead of North America and Europe, and it has enjoyed the fastest growth since the start of this decade, a study has showed.

North America and Western Europe hold roughly the same share of the global market, around 20.5 per cent, according to the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), a research body affiliated to the British weekly, The Economist.

The EIU calculates the market size of a country or region from its population (total and urban), private expenditure, steel consumption, electricity production and number of telephones, cars and televisions.

The data was compiled for 1995.

The world's fourth most important region is Latin America (with eight per cent of the global market), followed by Eastern

Europe (6.3 per cent), Africa (4.1 per cent), the Middle East (2.9 per cent) and Australasia (1.1 per cent).

By country, the major markets are the United States (18.4 per cent), China (12.3 per cent), Japan (8.3 per cent), India (6.35 per cent), Germany (4.5 per cent), Russia (four per cent), France (3.2 per cent), Italy (2.9 per cent), Britain (2.75 per cent), Brazil (2.7 per cent), Mexico (2.0 per cent) and Canada (two per cent).

Between 1990 and 1995, Asia surged ahead of other regions with a 25-per cent jump in the size of its market.

The next best performer was Latin America with a 20.7 per cent market growth, followed by Western Europe (8.8 per cent), Africa (7.9 per cent), Australasia (7.4 per cent), North America (6.7 per cent) and the Middle East (4.8 per cent).

In contrast, Eastern Europe saw its market

size squeezed by 17.2 per cent over five years.

Among individual countries, Mexico took the lead with an impressive 82 per cent growth rate, followed by China with 37 per cent and the United States with 5.9 per cent.

Russia, where the market contracted by 21.3 per cent, and Britain, which suffered a 1.4 per cent decline, were the only two among the top 12 countries to experience negative growth.

The EIU also assesses the "market intensity" of a region or country, calculated in relation to the global average for per capita wealth and consumption.

North America has the most "intense" market. Despite the relative poverty of China and India, Asia as a whole is above the world average, unlike Africa, Latin America and the Middle East.

## Japan loses ground to China in key Gulf market

DUBAI (AFP) — Japan has lost ground to China in a key Middle East commercial centre because of a surge in the yen and an export blitz by Beijing, official figures have showed.

China is now the second biggest exporter to Dubai after the United States while Japan has retreated to third place, after topping the list for several years before 1995, Dubai's state statistics office said.

The figures, published in local newspapers, showed Japan's exports to Dubai stood at around 6.2 billion dirhams (\$1.68 billion) in 1996 and those by China at 6.8 billion dirhams (\$1.85 billion).

In 1992, Japan's exports to Dubai totalled 7.2 billion dirhams (\$1.96 billion) while China's exports to the Gulf emirate stood at 3.8 billion dirhams (\$1.03 billion), less than half the Japanese sales.

"In 1995 and 1996, Japan retreated to third position in the list of exporters to Dubai after years of Japanese dominance," the report said.

Dubai is the main transshipment centre in the Middle East and a barometer of economic activity in the oil-rich region. Its imports of around \$15 billion in 1996 accounted for nearly a fifth of the Gulf's total purchases.

Officials said the decline in Japan's exports to Dubai reflected lower demand for its goods in the whole region due to the surge in the yen against the dollar, to which most Gulf currencies are effectively linked.

They noted Tokyo's sales to the Dubai, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) second biggest oil producer, fell to one of their lowest levels of 5.6 billion dirhams (\$1.52 billion) in 1995 due to a sharp rise in the yen.

"China's exports to Dubai and other Gulf states have been on the increase over the past few years as this country is launching continuous promotion drives and its products are competitively priced," a UAE official said.

China's trade with the Gulf was negligible during the 1980s before it opened a commercial office in Dubai

and started to stage trade exhibitions and send delegations, opening up to the world in sweeping reforms.

But in the Gulf as a whole, China is dwarfed by Japan with its trade with the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) not exceeding \$3 billion in 1996 compared with GCC-Japan exchanges of \$37.5 billion.

Japan's exports to Dubai are mainly electronics, cars, watches, machinery and other manufactured products. Those by China cover cheaper watches, toys, clothes, home appliances and foodstuffs.

Most of Dubai's imports are re-exported to neighbouring Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iran, India and as far as Hong Kong, Singapore and East Europe.

The report showed India was also gaining ground against other Asian exporters to Dubai, with its sales growing by nearly nine per cent to 4.4 billion dirhams (\$1.19 billion) in 1996 over the previous year.

It climbed from seventh to fifth in the exporters' list.

### HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1997

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

#### ARIES

(March 21 to April 19) Keep most of what you know to yourself. Let the information come to you, instead of the other way around. You're on a reconnaissance mission. A co-worker you see in a social setting can help put the whole thing into perspective. Your mate gives helpful feedback, too.

#### TAURUS

(April 20 to May 20) Somebody's who's your opposite is looking awfully attractive. Could this be the relationship of your dreams? Better give it time to develop. The other person's easily as stubborn as you are. There's no need to rush into anything, even if you've been doing this for years.

#### GEMINI

(May 21 to June 21) A job you're doing for a friend or loved one could take more time than you realised. You'll be lucky to get anything else done. Instead of complaining, give it your full attention. Otherwise, it'll take even longer! Your extra effort and good humour will pay off for you.

#### MOON CHILDREN

(June 22 to July 21) There's still a controversy at home, but that's all right. You and the most important person in your life can simply ignore it. Plan to spend this evening in a private location, where you can relax completely. You don't have to talk about it anymore. Do something else.

#### LEO

(July 22 to August 21) This day should turn out OK, but there could be a few tense moments. You and a partner need to make a decision. It concerns your home, or somebody who's in it. To answer this puzzle, get creative. One of your group may still not be satisfied, but he or she will be outvoted.

#### VIRGO

(August 22 to September 22) This is a good day to learn about love. One thing you may know already is that it doesn't take any money. Put that into your savings account instead. Or go buy something for the house together. An idea you have this afternoon can help make your workload lighter. Act on it.

#### LIBRA

(September 23 to October 22) Your attention, and quite a bit of your money, could go into your partner's enterprise. That's OK. You've had your day in the limelight. Somebody you care about needs a shove in the right direction. Your insight, and your other contributions, will make the difference.

#### SCORPIO

(October 23 to November 21) You're remarkably attractive today. People you don't even know may walk up to you and ask you for your autograph. They don't know who you are either, but they sense you must be somebody important. Sign with whatever name you want. It'll give them a thrill.

#### SAGITTARIUS

(November 22 to December 21) You're still playing catch-up, but that's OK. You need a weekend like this every once in a while. Talk some of your friends into helping, and make a party of it. You can make a party of anything. Later, a buddy of yours could have the solution to a persistent problem.

#### CAPRICORN

(December 22 to January 20) The outing you'd like to take with friends is too expensive. No need to put a major dent in your budget. Instead, ask for suggestions. A person you thought was a ditz could have a fabulous idea. It needn't be a little work, but you're good at that. You'll have a great time.

#### AQUARIUS

(January 21 to February 19) An older person has your life all figured out. He or she has all sorts of boops for you to jump through, in the name of love. Well, love's one thing, but blind obedience is another. Be nice, but make sure your own agenda gets included in the planning, too.

#### PISCES

(February 20 to March 20) A foreigner brings you luck today, as well as support, healing vibes and whatever else you want. Pay in like kind. There's still a lot of confusion, but you don't care. Travel near water to find peace, tranquillity and romance. Make it happen.

Birthstone of September: Sapphire — Lapis Lazuli

### THE Daily Crossword

ACROSS

- Bright
- Amphibian
- Sounds of laughter
- Fisherman, of a kind
- Golden —
- Mountains, Russia
- Small movie part
- Assistant
- Blackbird
- Chauffeur's food preference?
- Kind of blocker
- Actress Berger
- Actress Burstyn
- Swiss river
- Draft on
- Baltic's — "Gloria"
- Stick used in a game
- Saucy
- Call call
- Unaccompanied — fix
- Valued
- Salad makings
- Gaelic
- "Norma —"
- After gross
- Canoe is its capital
- Whale visitor
- Dickens' "Unah"
- Military hero's food preference?
- Raison d'—
- Take it easy
- Fresh air
- Solo
- Nobelist Wiesel
- Cozy abode
- Water testers?
- Unwanted plant
- Glossy

by Charles R. Woodard 09/24/97

#### Tuesday's Puzzle solved:

BOOK VEIN BALSAM  
BIBLE EGGS ARIEL  
RIVER SLORE SCARIE  
BYFITS ANDS TARTS  
RET TEN  
ENTAIL AGE ENID  
ROOSTY EBAN IRE  
ATTYEDRDPFANAY  
TEE INRE ELITE  
ODDS VET ANYLER  
IRA FCC  
ONCEINABLUEMOON  
PEONS BAUM ABRI  
TRINE ELKE ROTC  
SONAR TEEN LERE

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### Peanuts

I HAVE A NEW PHILOSOPHY... "WHY ME?"

DO THIS! DO THAT! WHY ME? GO HERE! GO THERE! WHY ME?

IF YOU'D MOVE A LITTLE BIT, I COULD SEE THE TV...

WHY ME?

### Andy Capp

HAVEN'T SEEN YOU FOR AGES, BILLY! STILL SINGLE?

YES, ANDY

MAN WASN'T MEANT TO BE ON HIS OWN, SON. HE NEEDS A COMPANION-SHIP...

EVER THOUGHT OF PIGEONS? I COULD GET YOU HALF A DOZEN CHEAP.

### Mutt'n' Jeff

MUTT, STOP SMELLING UP THE HOUSE WITH THAT AWFUL PIPE!

EITHER YOUR SMOKING GOES OUT OR YOU DO!

SHE PASSED THIS WITH FLYING COLORS.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here: A (Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: PRONE SANDY OUTLET TYPIST  
Answer: What they did when the wine ran low at the festival — STEPPED ON IT

### THE BETTER HALF.

By Glasbergen

I am not a computer. I am a fern.

"I bought this screen saver to discourage burglars."

### JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

MONDE

STULY

TEPICIS

ARQUEV

Answer here: A (Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: PRONE SANDY OUTLET TYPIST  
Answer: What they did when the wine ran low at the festival — STEPPED ON IT

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Mike Arphton

EEKK

You're hired!

SHE PASSED THIS WITH FLYING COLORS.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here: A (Answers tomorrow)

SSC investment

Corporation expand

Minister approve handicraft

EUROPE

The Business of

Map: Currencies & Cross Rates

	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF
1 US\$	1.7385	0.8227	0.6936	0.7566
1 DM	0.5758	1.0000	0.8333	0.8933
1 £	1.4603	1.2136	1.0000	1.0663
1 CHF	1.3303	1.1224	0.9375	1.0000

Map: Currencies & Cross Rates

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## SSC investments may exceed JD1b

**\*\* TOTAL INVESTMENTS** of the Social Security Corporation (SSC) are expected to exceed JD1 billion during the final quarter of this year, according to an official source at the SSC. Noting that total investments have been increasing steadily, he said that the amount stood at JD901 million at the end of the first quarter of this year.

At the end of last year, total investments amounted to JD865 million, a 15.7 per cent growth over the JD748 million reached at the end of 1995. The 1995 amount was 13.8 per cent higher than the JD657 million total investments at the end of 1994 (Al Ra'i).

## Corporation helps set up, expand 800 projects

**\*\* THE JORDAN Loan Guarantee Corporation** has participated in setting up or expanding 800 projects that provided around 3,800 job opportunities, the corporation's general manager, Jamal Salah, has announced. He indicated that this achievement was made possible by the corporation guaranteeing JD8 million out of JD15 million of loans extended by banks for small projects.

By guaranteeing 50 per cent or 75 per cent of a loan from a local bank to a client, the corporation encourages banks to provide financing to people who are unable to provide guarantees usually required by banks. Dr. Salah indicated that 50 per cent of the loans that were guaranteed by the corporation were directed to establishing or expanding projects outside the Amman area to encourage businesses in geographical regions that are less fortunate.

Speaking about the importance and role of small and medium-size industries in the Kingdom, Dr. Salah highlighted 1994 statistics that showed that out of 21,000 industrial entities, 97 per cent of them employed less than 20 persons. These small industries have a total workforce of around 60,000 persons or 48 per cent of all workers in industrial entities, he said.

The statistics also show that around 17,000 small industries employ four workers or less. As such, approximately 37,000 persons work in this category or about 29 per cent of the overall number of workers in the industrial sector (Al Dustour).

## Minister approves setting up handicraft city in Ma'an

**\*\* MUNICIPALITIES AND Rural Affairs Minister Tawfiq Kreishan** has approved setting up an integrated handicraft city on a 250-dunum of land in Ma'an. The handicraft city would include centres to maintain and service all types of cars, blacksmiths, tiles and bricks factories as well as facilities for general services. The municipality of Ma'an in cooperation with the concerned departments will provide the infrastructure for this projects (Al Ra'i).

## Bahrain and Kuwait ink protocol to link bourses

MANAMA (R) — Bahrain and Kuwait have signed a protocol linking their stock exchanges allowing for cross-trading and listing of firms in the two countries, bourse officials said.

Traders said the deal, creating a regional market with a joint capitalisation of around \$23 billion, would boost stocks, increase confidence and bring money needed for development.

The signed protocol provides for the increase of joint cooperation in the issuance and trading of securities listed in both stock exchanges in order to encourage investment in this sector, Bahrain Stock Exchange (BSE) said in a statement sent to Reuters.

"Both stock exchanges will work together to facilitate conditions and procedures of trading in securities, listed in the two

exchanges and will also organise the clearing and settlement procedures in a way that ensures the rights of investors in both countries," it said.

The statement said practical moves were expected to begin soon through the signing of bilateral agreements between brokers licensed in the two stock exchanges.

Traders said many private Kuwaiti businessmen are already investing heavily in the Bahrain exchange, described by officials as the cheapest but one of the most promising markets in the region.

Bahrain's index closed the week to Thursday at 2,065.82 points, up 4.36 points from a week earlier. Kuwait's index ended the week Wednesday at a record high of 2,544.20 points, a 1.48 per cent rise

from the previous week.

Bahrain, a main financial and banking centre in the Gulf, and Oman began cross-listing shares on each other's market in March 1995 in the first such step in the region.

Three Omani firms are now listed on the BSE, but brokers say trade has so far been negligible. Critics said lack of information has hampered development of cross-border trade.

Oman and Bahrain have already signed a memorandum with Kuwait, which has a market capitalisation of around \$18 billion, to link the three countries' exchanges.

The Bahraini market is open to Gulf Arab nationals although a few firms are also open to non-Gulf foreign investors.

## IFC financing for poor countries higher

HONG KONG (AFP) — The International Finance Corporation (IFC) said it had approved \$3.3 billion of financing for 276 projects in the year to June 1997, up from \$3.2 billion a year earlier.

Projects approved for small and medium-sized enterprise projects soared 43 per cent, said the IFC, the private sector arm of the World Bank which is the largest source of equity and loan financing for private sector projects in developing countries.

"IFC's results for fiscal year 1997 reflect a year of innovation and change... with activities in more countries and more enterprises and development of more financial products than ever before," said Janak Lindback, the IFC executive vice president.

To finance its lending programme, which covered projects in 84 countries in fiscal 1997, the IFC borrowed some \$54 billion during the year,

virtually all of it on international capital markets.

It also made some currency borrowings in emerging markets, in the form of bond issues in Czech koruna, South African rand, Slovak koruna and Philippine pesos.

The IFC was heavily involved in financing aimed at tackling environmental issues, and approved \$135 million, including \$65 million in syndications, for an environmental upgrade and expansion of a power generation plant in the Czech Republic.

Without the improvements, the plant would have to be shut down under a new Czech clean air law.

As part of its mission to support privatisation, the IFC was the principal adviser in a \$7 billion privatisation of the Manila water and sewage system, helping find top sponsors to deliver a greatly improved service.

## South Asia offers easy visas, cheap tickets to boost tourism

COLOMBO (AFP) —

South Asian tourism ministers have agreed to ease visa restrictions for nationals travelling within the region and offer cheap air tickets to woo foreign visitors, officials have said.

Ministers from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka agreed to simplify visa procedures and harmonise customs formal-

tions in the region.

But they sidestepped a proposal by Sri Lanka to make South Asian currencies freely convertible within the region by saying that they "supported further steps to facilitate easier travel within the region."

Officials said the ministers proposed a 30 per cent discount on tickets issued by their national airlines to tourists visiting at least three destina-

tions in the region.

"There are lot of technical issues on this concessionary travel to be worked out so there was no final agreement on the implementation date for the scheme," an official said.

The meeting also shelved Sri Lanka's proposal completely to lift visa formalities because of the "political realities" among members of the seven-nation South Asian

Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

Sri Lanka's Tourism Minister Dharmasiri Senanayake said they had for the first time taken a collective approach to promoting tourism in South Asia.

Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga urged SAARC nations to jointly promote tourism and said they had failed to exploit the region's potential.

Ms. Kumaratunga said the region's share of the global tourism market was less than one per cent.

She said only the Indian Ocean atoll nation of Maldives had a fully developed tourism industry while others were lagging behind despite beautiful beaches, mountains, cultural and scenic sights elsewhere in the region.

## REUTERS THE BUSINESS OF INFORMATION

### Major Currencies & Cross Rates Prices as at 28/09/97 19:02

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	ITL	FRF
US Dollar	1.7585	0.6227	1.4543	121.30	1.3843	1717.89	1.9797
DE Mark	0.5687	1.0000	0.3539	0.6270	0.7870	978.63	1.1259
GB Sterling	1.6090	2.8325	1.0000	2.3384	194.82	2232.93	3.1794
CH Franc	0.6878	1.2084	0.4278	1.0000	0.8513	1180.52	1.3638
JP Yen	0.0082	1.4491	0.5130	1.1984	1.1407	14.18	163.14
CA Dollar	0.7224	1.2772	0.4486	1.0539	1.14	1247.54	1.4380
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0230	0.3621	0.0848	1418.44	0.8053	11.52
NL Guilder	0.5051	88.78	0.3143	73.45	81.22	0.8989	867.31
FR Franc	0.1693	0.2976	0.1053	24.6112	20.51	0.2343	33.5000

### Middle Eastern Currencies

Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BAH	QAT	KUW	AED	LEB	EGP
US Dollar	0.7085	3.7504	0.3770	3.6398	0.3040	3.6728	1537.00	3.3875	
Jordan Dinar	1.4114	1.0000	5.2934	0.5321	5.1373	5.1839	2189.37	4.7812	
Saudi Riyal	0.2666	0.1889	1.0000	0.1005	0.97	0.0811	408.82	0.9032	
Bahrain Dinar	2.65	1.8784	9.9483	1.0000	9.95	0.8064	9.74	4077.03	0.9858
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1947	1.0304	1.0304	1.0000	0.0835	1.01	422.28	0.9307
Kuwait Dinar	3.2893	2.3304	12.3380	1.2400	11.97	12.08	5055.59	0.9307	
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1929	1.0211	1.0208	0.9910	0.0828	418.48	0.9223	
Lebanese/1000	0.65	0.4610	2.4401	0.2453	2.3681	0.1978	2.3696	2.2040	
Egyptian	0.2952	0.2092	1.1071	0.1113	1.0745	0.0897	1.0842	453.73	

### Energy

Oil	Last	Revenue
Brent	19.72	19.41
WT Brent	20.84	20.35
Bonny	19.72	19.41
Dubai	18.25	18.15
UL Gas	191.00	195.00

### Metal Prices

Metal	Bid	Offer
Gold (oz's)	328.1	328.6
Silver (oz's)	4.82	4.83
Platinum (oz's)	427.7	428.7
AL (3 Months)	1642	1645
CU (3 Months)	2094	2098
Zinc (3 Months)	1425	1430
Lead (3 Months)	651	654
Ni (3 Months)	6805	6825

## JORDAN MARKETPLACE \*\*\* JORDAN MARKETPLACE \*\*\* JORDAN MARKETPLACE

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# Sampras wins Grand Slam Cup

MUNICH (AFP) — Pete Sampras broke the bank Sunday at the Grand Slam Cup, defeating U.S. Open champion Pat Rafter 6-2, 6-4, 7-5 to wrap up a week's work worth \$2 million.

Sampras, whose payout included a \$500,000 bonus for titles at the Australian Open and Wimbledon, hiked his 1997 prizemoney substantially and ran his total winnings at the Munich event in six appearances to nearly \$7.4 million.

The American continued his career-long domination over his Australian opponent in the one hour, 35-minute contest at the Olympiahalle. The victory came less than 24 hours after Sampras ousted British No. 1 Greg Rusedski in a semi-final.

Rafter earned his place in the championship match by overcoming Czech player Petr Korda in five draining sets lasting for more than four hours on Saturday.

"I played extremely well today," said Sampras. "Patrick, I think, was tired from his semi-final. But he's a great player and has improved a lot this year. He'll be around for a lot of years."

One week ago, Sampras beat Rafter to lead the United States into the Davis Cup final at the expense of the Aussies. There was little change in the scenario on Sunday.

Sampras overhauled the Australian after Rafter had run up a 40-love lead in the 11th game of the third set. The powerful American broke the flagging Aussie for 6-5 and finished up the match a game later with an



Patrick Rafter of Australia (R) grimaces as he looks at his runners-up trophy while Pete Sampras of the United States holds the winner's trophy of the Munich tennis Grand Slam Cup tournament. Sampras beat Rafter 6-2 6-4 7-5 to win the prize money of \$1.6 million (Reuters photo)

overhead winner on the first of two match points.

The Munich match was the first time that two reigning Grand Slam champions have met in the final of the \$6 million 16-man invitational, which was being contested for the eighth time.

Sampras improved his record over Rafter to seven wins and a single loss, which he took in 1993 at the hands of the Queenslander.

"He was just too good again for me today," said Rafter. "It's been like that for the last seven or eight times and it's getting bor-

ing. "Pete showed why he's so far ahead of everyone else. Maybe someday he'll go off the boil and I'll have a chance."

Both men will compete next week in Basle at the Swiss Indoors, where World No. 1 Sampras is top seed.

Sampras exerted his domination early, breaking Rafter in the opening game, then piling on two love games to hold a 3-1 margin.

The American swept through to claim the set in 21 minutes, then continued barrelling through the second against the World No.

3. Rafter, fighting to stay alive, saved a break point in the opening game of the second set in the face of the Sampras superiority.

But the American bore down, breaking in the ninth game for 5-4 and serving up a two-set-to-love lead a game later after just 56 minutes on court.

Sampras faced — and saved — the first break point against his serve in the match during the sixth game of the third set, winning with a backhand volley for 3-1.

From that point on the end was in sight.

## Zulle continues lead in Tour of Spain

MADRID (AFP) — Alex Zulle of Switzerland Sunday completed a comprehensive victory in the Tour of Spain — his second straight win in the race.

ONCE rider Zulle, 29, easily conserved his lead by finishing in the pack in the 22nd and final stage, a 148.5km ride around the outskirts of Madrid.

The final stage was won in a sprint by Dutchman Max van Heeswijk.

Zulle had held the yellow jersey since the first time-trial of the race, the ninth stage. He finished in front of Spaniard Fernando Escartin (Kelme) and Swiss rider Laurent Dufaux (Festina).

It was a final win for ONCE for Zulle, who will join the Festina team next year.

Only 125 riders made it to the end of the race after 198 started in Lisbon, Portugal, three weeks ago.

## World Cup qualifiers South Korea, UAE win

TOKYO (Agencies) — Lee Min-Sung fired home a long-range goal four minutes from the end to seal a 2-1 comeback victory for South Korea over arch-rivals Japan in their World Cup Asian Zone qualifying match here Sunday.

The capacity 56,704 crowd in the Tokyo National Stadium were stunned to silence by Lee's shot, which put South Korea top of Asian qualifying Group B with three victories from three matches.

United Arab Emirates beat Uzbekistan 2-1 on Saturday and are second with two wins and a draw, while Japan, five points behind the Koreans, now face a mammoth task to reach next year's World Cup finals in France.

Motohiro Yamaguchi scored early in the second half to encourage Japanese fans to believe they were on the way to a victory that would completely change the group.

But Seo Jung-Won headed an equaliser in the 83rd minute and Lee's winner three minutes later meant it was the 5,000 heavily-guarded Korean fans in the stadium who were celebrating.

The two sides are long-standing soccer rivals, even though they will co-host the 2002 World Cup finals, and Korean coach Cha Bum-Kun had vowed to inflict a humiliating defeat in Tokyo.

After conceding the first goal Cha said the team had looked rocky and he had ordered them "to stay

calm."

"I sent on two speedy attackers in the second half, because I saw the Japanese players had slowed down, and it worked pretty well. I'm really glad that we won such an exciting match against Japan," he said.

After a goalless first half, tension rose and both sides committed niggly fouls.

Naoki Soma fired one shot onto the right post, while South Korea's Hong Myung-Bo saw a header punched away by goalkeeper Yoshikatsu Kawaguchi in the 64th minute.

Japan took the lead seconds later. Yamaguchi stole the ball, moved into the penalty area and, after tarrying, lobbed the ball over Korean keeper Kim Byung-Ji into the net.

Japan then played too defensively and paid the price against a Korean side looking to reach their fourth straight World Cup finals.

Seo headed the ball from the middle of the goal area despite having three Japanese defenders around him.

Three minutes later, Jang Hyung-Seok set up Lee for a shot past the diving Kawaguchi.

"We lost one goal because of the only mistake. But otherwise, we shut out any attacks by the Japanese today," said Cha.

South Korea have now beaten Japan 33 times, lost nine games and the two have drawn 14 times since their first encounter in 1954.

South Korea take on the

UAE at home and Japan play Kazakhstan away on October 4.

One team qualifies automatically from each of the two Asian groups. The second placed nations will play-off for a third spot and the loser of that match will take on Australia in another playoff in November.

### UAE beat Uzbekistan

In Tashkent, Uzbekistan lost to the United Arab Emirates 3-2 Saturday in the Asian World Cup qualifiers.

Uzbekistan's Nikolay Shirshov had a goal in the 12th minute, the only score of the first half.

UAE then scored two goals after Uzbekistan's Sukhrat Muksudov was sent off in the 41st minute for arguing with the referee. Zuhair Bakhit tied the game with a header in the 56th minute, and Bahit Saad put UAE ahead 2-1 with a goal in the 64th.

Adnan Al Talani put UAE ahead 3-1 in the 85th minute.

The UAE goalie, Mohsin Mussabeh scored a virtual own goal in the 90th minute, putting the ball into play and rebounding it into the net off the back of Uzbek player Ravshan hazarov, who was credited with the goal.

But it was too late for Uzbekistan's team, which was unable to make a recovery before the final whistle.

## SPORTS IN BRIEF

### Tyson fight deal terminated

LAS VEGAS (AFP) — Mike Tyson's six-fight contract to box at a hotel here has been terminated one hour short of completion. Promoter Don King and the MGM Grand Hotel struck a deal to end the pact that has seen Tyson fight his major bouts on the Las Vegas Strip since his return to boxing following a three-year prison sentence for rape. The hotel began moves to escape the contract in July when Tyson was banished from the sport for biting Evander Holyfield during their June 23 World Boxing Association heavyweight title bout at the Grand. Hotel officials considered Tyson in breach of the pact because he was not available to fight before the deal expired next March. Tyson can apply for reinstatement of his boxing license next July after one year out of the ring.

### Fromberg wins 4th career title

BUCHAREST (AFP) — Australian Richard Fromberg downed Italian Andrea Gaudenzi in straight sets Sunday to win the \$475,000 ATP Tour tournament here. Fromberg's 6-1, 7-6 (7/2) win in a match between two unseeded players gave the clay court specialist the fourth career title of his career — but his first for six years. The tall 27-year-old Tasmanian's previous titles came at Bologna and Bastad in 1990 and Wellington, New Zealand, in 1991.

### Cermeno retains title

CARACAS (AFP) — Antonio Cermeno of Venezuela retained his WBA super-bantamweight title on Saturday night with a unanimous points decision over his compatriot Jose "Cheo" Rojas. The judges scored 117-113, 117-114 and 119-112 in favour of Cermeno, who made his eighth successful defence. Cermeno, 28, improved his record to 29-1.

### Peslier upstages Dettori at Ascot

LONDON (R) — Top French jockey Olivier Peslier upstaged Frankie Dettori at Ascot on Saturday a year to the day when the Italian rode all seven winners at odds of over 25,000-1. Peslier had three winners from four rides, including 9-1 chance air express in the big race of the day, the group one Queen Elizabeth II Stakes, the other two winners were both 14-1 chances, giving Peslier a treble of around 2,250-1. Dettori managed just one winner from seven mounts, riding 9-2 chance Jaseur to a three length victory in the last event, the race which 12 months ago was the finale to his historic feat.

## Ronaldo keeps Inter on top Juventus, Sampdoria draw

MILAN (AFP) — Ronaldo and Yuri Djorkaeff made sure Inter Milan's winning run continued on Saturday night as they crushed nine-man Lecce 5-1 to stay top of Italy's Serie A.

In Saturday's other matches, 10-man champions Juventus scored once in injury-time to draw 1-1 with Sampdoria. Lazio scored twice in injury-time to beat Bari 3-2 and Parma trounced Udinese 4-0.

Ronaldo and Djorkaeff scored two each and substitute Maurizio Ganz added the fifth, only a minute after coming on, as Inter pressed home their numerical advantage over Lecce.

Djorkaeff broke the deadlock in the 32nd minute with a volley from the edge of the area, and Lecce had midfielder Maurizio Rossi sent off minutes later.

Ronaldo, who had already made his presence felt with a shot which hit both posts, then drove home a free-kick in first-half injury time.

Francesco Palmieri pulled one back for Lecce from the penalty spot, but a few minutes later Yugoslav defender Nenad Sakić was given his marching orders for a second bookable offence.

Djorkaeff added Inter's third with a 78th minute free-kick. Ronaldo scored his fourth league goal in three games and Ganz completed the rout in the 83rd minute.

Inter, with 12 points from four games, have won all seven matches this season between league and cup competition.

However, there may have been six goals at Lecce but the Olympic stadium was the place to be for thrills as Czech midfielder Pavel Nedved opened and closed the scoring for Lazio.

Nedved, who had earned Lazio a penalty in all three previous league matches, gave them a fourth-minute lead with a fine shot from 18-yards.

But Sergio Volpi smacked home a free-kick in the third minute of first-half injury-time, his shot taking a deflection of Giorgio Venturin in the Lazio wall, to make it 1-1.

And in a fairytale substitution, Roberto Ripa ran onto the field in the 60th minute and 10 seconds later headed Bari's second.

The turning point came when Bari had substitute Phil Masinga sent off in the 80th minute — the South African's second red card in three matches.

Giuseppe Signori drove home a free-kick in the first minute of injury time and as Lazio piled on the pressure, Nedved snatched another three minutes later — to the amazement of the 45,000 crowd.

Earlier in the day, Juventus' new striker Filippo Inzaghi had robbed Sampdoria of all three points in Genoa.

Angelo Morales, known as "Maute" in his native Argentina, scored his first goal for Sampdoria in the 15th minute after neat work by Vincenzo Montella on the edge of the area.

The Italian champions played the last 15 minutes with 10 men after Uruguayan defender Paolo Montero was dismissed.

But it didn't stop Inzaghi, the Serie A's top scorer last season with Atalanta, from exploiting a moment's hesitation in the Sampdoria defence and scoring from the edge of the six-yard box.

Juventus coach Marcello Lippi said: "Sampdoria played very well, especially in the first half, and we didn't do much. But we responded well to being down to 10 men."

"You don't always manage to come back in situations like that," he admitted, "but today we managed it." Parma, who like Juventus will be playing in the Champions League next week, produced a three-goal blitz in the last 10 minutes as they overran Udinese.

Argentina's Hernan Crespo gave Parma a 32nd minute lead and they looked ready to settle for that after Enrico Chiesa missed a second-half penalty.

But the goal rush started when Udinese goalkeeper Luigi Turci parried Nestor Sensi's volley in the 83rd minute and the Argentine snapped up the rebound.

Substitute Filippo Maniero scored the third in the 86th minute and Pietro Strada converted an 88th minute penalty to complete the rout.



Jana Novotna

## Novotna claims Leipzig title

LEIPZIG (AFP) — World No. 2 Jana Novotna of the Czech Republic won the \$450,000 WTA Tour tournament here on Sunday, beating diminutive South African Amanda Coetzer 6-2, 4-6, 6-3.

Novotna, 28, had to call on all her guile and experience to win a tough encounter in 1hr 58min but her serve and volley game finally had the edge against Coetzer's chiefly base-line orientated strategy.

Coetzer, world number six, fought valiantly with a string of passing-shots and clever lobs as both women hurtled round the

court. Novotna was quickest out of the blocks as she broke Coetzer right at the start and steamed through the opening set as the South African failed to reach the heights of her semi-final win over World No. 1 Martina Hingis, only the latter's third defeat of the entire season.

In the second set, Coetzer, just 1.57m tall to Wimbledon finalist Novotna's 1.75m, set herself up to level at one set-all as she broke the Czech to lead 4-1 before wrapping up the set 6-4.

Novotna reestablished her dominance when she broke in the fifth game of

the deciding set. But the tenacious Coetzer so nearly broke back three games later, twice having a break point while there were also eight deuces.

However, Novotna survived the scare to go 5-3 up with her sixth game point. That broke Coetzer's resolve and she duly conceded the match on her own service, to go 3-3 in her career showing winning the event for the second time after 1994.

## Hearts on top

GLASGOW (AFP) — Hearts topped the Premier League after beating Celtic 1-0 Sunday. Hearts moved to the top with a 3-1 demolition of Celtic.

Sunday's winners took lead to one from behind to earn a point in a match between two unseeded teams, but for defensive frailties were once again exposed in front of nearly 50,000 fans at Celtic Park.

Tommy Coyne silenced Celtic's crowd with a 10th minute goal. Hearts' manager Walter Smith plenty to worry his side ahead of Tuesday's UEFA Cup return with Rangers.

A second half equaliser from Italian defender Sergio Porrini maintained Rangers' unbeaten start, but for defensive frailties were once again exposed in front of nearly 50,000 fans at Celtic Park.

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	Bruce Willis...in	Robin Williams & Gene Hackman ...in		CONCORD "1" Jack Nicholson, Glenn Close, Danny Devito & Pierce Brosnan...in	ABDOUN John Travolta & Nicolas Cage ... in	ABDOUN Julia Roberts ... in	Watch out for the new play
	THE FIFTH ELEMENT	THE BIRDCAGE	BAD COMPANY	MARS ATTACKS (12:30, 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:30)	FACE OFF	MY BEST FRIEND'S WEDDING	THE GOVERNMENT IN THE SERVICE OF PEOPLE
	Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	CONCORD "2" BATMAN & ROBIN Shows: 3:30, 5:45 only	Shows: 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:45	Shows: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	Starring Hisham Yares and Amal Dabbas

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## Playoff-bound Giants sink Dodger hopes

SAN FRANCISCO (AFP) — The San Francisco Giants are going to the Major League Baseball playoffs for the first time in eight years while the Los Angeles Dodgers are going home.

The Giants beat San Diego 6-1 here Saturday to clinch the National League West division title, ending the Dodgers' playoff hopes by claiming the final undecided post-season spot on the season's penultimate day.

Playoff action begins Tuesday with the Giants travelling to Florida and Houston visiting Atlanta in the National League while Cleveland visits the reigning World Series champion New York Yankees in the American League.

Wilson Alvarez and two relief pitchers scattered four hits for the Giants, who make their first playoff appearance since being swept in four games by the Oakland A's in the 1989 World Series.

"There's not a sweeter moment in the world," said reliever Rod Beck, who got the final out to secure the playoff berth.

It marks only the fifth time since moving from New York in 1958 that the Giants have reached the playoffs. This is the first time San Francisco fans were able to witness a playoff-clinching victory.

The Giants become the fourth team in this century to go from worst to first, joining the 1991 Minnesota Twins and Atlanta Braves and 1993 Philadelphia Phillies.

The Giants have had a 23-

game turnaround from last year's last-place finish and secured the playoff spot by gaining four games on the Dodgers in a 10-day span, topping them from the division lead in the final two weeks.

"We're very frustrated at this point but we have to say congratulations to the Giants," Dodgers catcher Mike Piazza said.

"They did the job, they earned it. We've got to come back next year and find a way to win."

The Dodgers did all they could to stay in contention, winning 6-1 at Colorado. Ramon Martinez allowed five hits over 7 2/3 innings and Ovis Nixoo drove in a pair of runs.

But Piazza said the effort needed to overcome a slow start took too much out of the Dodgers by the finish of the pennant race.

"We came from eight

games out at the end of June," said Piazza.

"We made up a lot of ground. Maybe it took a lot out of us. We played well at times, but we had some missed opportunities that really came back to hurt."

Los Angeles was set to go with Korean pitcher Park Chan Ho on Sunday in an all-or-nothing bid, but his start was rendered meaningless by the San Francisco victory.

"Obviously we thought we had a good enough team to win. It just didn't happen," Los Angeles manager Bill Russell said. "We had a two-game lead and went into San Francisco, we lost two games there and then the Rockies swept us. That was really our downfall. We would pitch a good game and couldn't score any runs. We would score runs and our pitching couldn't hold it."

## Barcelona lead the field

MADRID (AFP) — Barcelona kept up their 100 per cent record and two-point lead in the Spanish championship on Saturday following a crushing 4-1 victory at Sporting Gijon.

Brazil's Rivaldo and Spain's Luis Enrique found the net twice each to keep the Catalonians ahead of champions Real Madrid.

Rivaldo is becoming a worthy successor to world player of the year Ronaldo as he heads the Spanish scorers list with five goals in four matches.

And Luis Enrique had the fortune to hit a double in his home town and against his first profession club.

Madrid also won away — 2-0 to Valencia with goals from Pedrag Mitajovic and Raul.

Raul's goal was sublime as he outwitted a defender before firing past his Spanish international teammate Andoni Zubizarreta between the posts.

Then Raul switched to playmaker to set up Yugoslavian teammate Mitajovic who oozed up his first goal of the season against his ex-fans of Valencia, unhappy since his departure.

Atletico Madrid's Juninho silenced criticism from president Jesus Gil who claimed their Brazilian signing from Middlesbrough was out in top form. He fired over an accurate cross for Christian Vieri to score their first goal after they trailed 2-0 to Celta Vigo. The final result was 3-3.

Meanwhile on a superb night for Brazilian players in Spain, Luizao, Djalminha and Flavio Coccorico all scored in Deportivo La Coruna's first victory, 4-1 against Santander.

And on another positive note, Deportivo president Cesar Augusto Lendoiro said it was 99 per cent certain that Brazil's World Cup star Bebeto would be returning.

## Villeneuve wins Luxembourg Grand Prix

NURBURGRING, Germany (AFP) — Canadian Jacques Villeneuve, driving a Williams-Renault, won the Luxembourg Grand Prix here on Sunday and took the overall lead in the drivers' championship. He has a nine-point advantage over Germany's Michael Schumacher with two races to go.

Freeman Jean Alesi, driving a Benetton-Renault, was second and Heinz-Harald Frentzen of Germany, also driving a Williams, was third.

Two-time world champion Schumacher's Ferrari was forced to retire after two laps with a broken suspension which resulted from a clash with the two Jordan cars, driven by his younger brother Ralf and Italian Giancarlo Fisichella, on the first corner.

"I'm very disappointed. It's dreadful how to my championship chances," Michael Schumacher said. "Ralf could do nothing about it he was driving his race and came round the outside. I lost some wheel speed at the beginning and that was that."

Ralf, however, was less forgiving and blamed his teammate for the clash.

"Fisichella shouldn't have done what he did. There wasn't room for all three cars. I am certainly not to blame. It was a shame because I had a really good start. Is my brother angry with me? No. It was just a normal racing accident," he said.

The 26-year-old Villeneuve, who was winning at the track he recorded his first ever Formula One win, assumed command when a double mishap hit the McLaren team.

The team were dominating the race but first David Coulthard, running in second, saw his chances of a third win this season disappear with a blown engine on the 42nd lap and then race leader Mika Hakkinen of Finland, who had gained his first pole position in 95 appearances, retired on the 43rd lap with engine problems.

"That's motor racing. You've just got to keep on smiling and I will. I could give you a long report, but what's the point," a disappointed Hakkinen said.

A relieved Villeneuve said that he would have settled for third place prior to that.

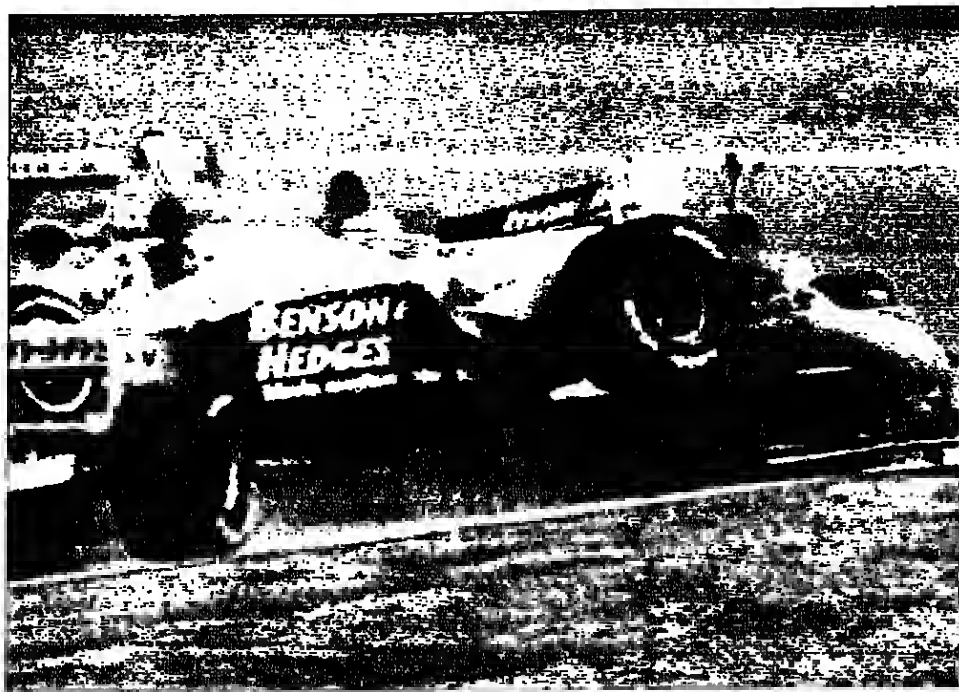
"I was delighted when I saw Michael was out in the race."

Villeneuve, who was his seventh race of the season, was over in trouble after that, particularly as Brazilian Rubens Barrichello — who had moved briefly into second — was another casualty on the 43rd lap.

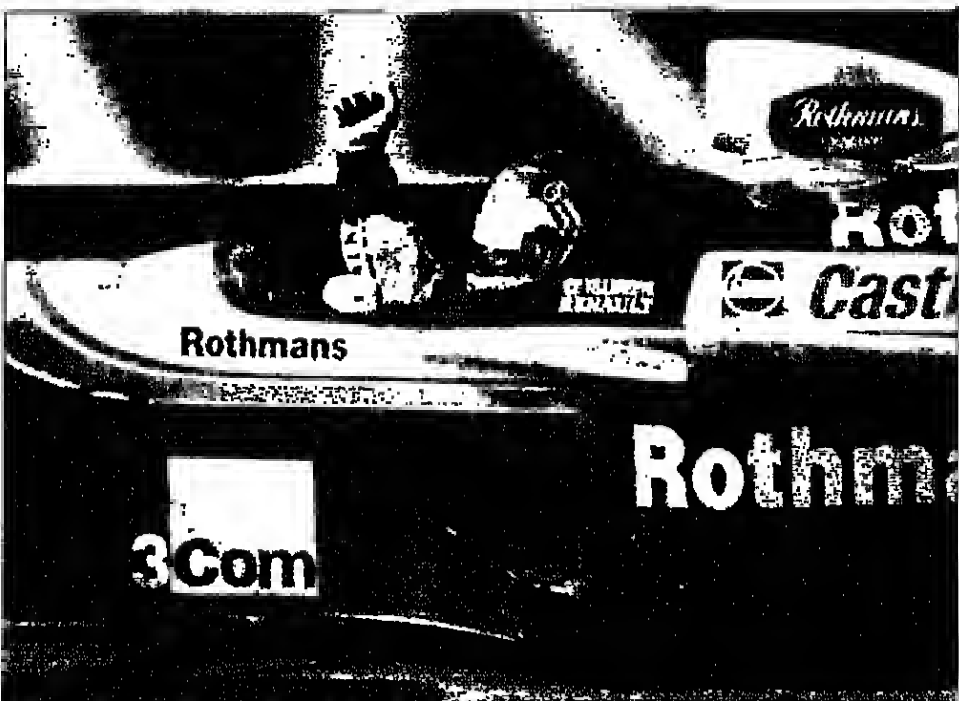
The Canadian coasted home over 11 seconds clear of Alesi with only another five seconds to Frentzen, who had been pushed back into 13th when he and Villeneuve clashed on the first corner.

Austrian veteran Gerhard Berger was fourth in the second Benetton-Renault.

Arrows driver Pedro Diniz held on for fifth under enormous pressure from Frenchman Olivier Panis, driving a Prost-Mugen Honda.



German Formula One driver Ralf Schumacher's car (L) collides with the Ferrari of his brother Michael Schumacher (R) after the start of the Luxembourg Grand Prix. Ralf Schumacher went out following the collision and world drivers' points leader Michael went on to the following lap (Reuters photo)



Canadian Formula One driver Jacques Villeneuve raises his fist after winning the Luxembourg Grand Prix, September 28. Villeneuve leads with nine points ahead of German Michael Schumacher (Reuters photo)

## Hearts on top as Rangers slip

GLASGOW (AFP) — Rangers slipped to second in the Scottish Premier division after being held to a 2-2 draw at home to Motherwell as Hearts returned to the top with a 3-0 demolition of Kilmarnock on Sunday.

Rangers twice had to come from behind to earn a point as modest Motherwell gave Rangers manager Walter Smith plenty to worry about ahead of Tuesday's UEFA Cup return with Strasbourg.

A second half equaliser from Italian defender Sergio Porrini maintained Rangers unbeaten start, but their defensive frailties were once again exposed in front of nearly 49,000 frustrated fans.

Tommy Coyne silenced the Ibrox crowd with Motherwell's opener after just seven minutes before Premier division topscorer Marco Negri brought the sides level 10 minutes later.

Rangers found themselves trailing a second time when Namibian Elphas Shivute pounced at the far post for his first goal in Scottish football to restore the visitors' advantage.

Elsewhere, Celtic warmed up for their UEFA Cup return with Liverpool by turning up the heat with a 2-1 win over on struggling Dundee United at Tannadice.

Three goals in a devastating first half gave Hearts a

3-0 win at struggling Kilmarnock and showed that they will be a force to be reckoned with in the Scottish premier division this season.

The pressure is mounting on Aberdeen boss Roy Aitken after his side slipped to a dramatic 2-1 defeat to Dunfermline at Pitodrie.

Aitken, who was appointed boss in February 1995, has seen his high earners

pick up only two wins in their past 27 League games.

Aberdeen have still to record a victory in the league this season and remain at the foot of the table.

In the day's other match, third-placed Hibernian were held to a 1-1 draw at home by lowly St Johnstone despite grabbing a second minute lead.

### GORAN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANIA HIRSCH

#### EAST DOES IT

Both vulnerable. North deals

NORTH: ♠ A 10 9 5 4, ♥ A K J 6 2, ♦ A Q, ♣ Q 2

WEST: ♠ 8 6 2, ♥ Q 10 4 3, ♦ K 10 6 5, ♣ A 8

EAST: ♠ A K 7, ♥ Q 8 7, ♦ Q J 8 8, ♣ A 10 7 5 4

SOUTH: ♠ A Q 3, ♥ Q 5, ♦ A Q 7 2, ♣ A K J 8 8 3

The bidding: NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST 1♠ Pass 2♠ Pass 3♠ Pass 4♠ Pass

Opening lead: Eight of ♠

It is all very well to look for spectacular plays on every hand. However, be prepared to accept the reality that, more often than not, the simple line is the best.

There is considerable dispute about the meaning of South's second bid. To those who apply the fourth-suit forcing to everything they see, the situation is crystal

clear. We, however, lean toward using the fourth suit artificially only at the two-level, and here it was intended as a high reverse to show a good hand. North had no trouble reading it as such, hence the jump to six clubs.

The contract is better than it might seem on the surface, since West might make a helpful opening lead. The trump suit did not further the cause, except to solidify the club holding. After trying with other ideas, declarer finally elected to adopt a straightforward line to lead the contract if hearts broke 4-3 or the queen was doubleton, and trumps no worse than 4-1.

The opening lead was run to the closed hand, declarer capturing the ten with the jack. Next came a heart to the ace, followed by a heart ruff in the closed hand. The ace of diamonds was cashed and a diamond was trumped with the queen and another heart was ruffed low.

When both defenders followed to this trick, all was well.

Trumps were drawn, declarer discarding three spades from dummy. The ace of spades provided the entry to cash the king and jack of hearts, bringing declarer's total to 12, and the last trick was surrendered to the defender.

## McEnroe takes Johannesburg title

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa (AP) — John McEnroe beat top seed Johan Kriek on Sunday to capture the champions tennis title at Sandton Gardens.

The former World No. 1, and third seed in Sandton, took the match 7-6 (8-6) 6-2. Last week, McEnroe won the title in Paris, beating fellow American Kriek 6-4 6-4 in the final.

The early part of the match was dominated by the server and it wasn't until the 10th game that the first break point chance appeared.

It was Kriek who found himself down 0-40, giving McEnroe three set points, but the former South African came up with five magnificent first serves to get out of trouble and level at 5-5.

The turning point came when, at 6-6, McEnroe's shot clipped the top of the net and dribbled over. That gave McEnroe his fifth set point, which he converted with a characteristic passing shot.

"It goes to show it's better to be lucky and good than just good," said McEnroe.

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TEL AVIV (R) — An Israeli peace group called Sunday for a boycott of all goods produced in Jewish settlements in territories occupied by Israel in 1967.

"We call upon the whole world to support peace by not buying products made in settlements," Uri Avneri, a leader of Gush Shalom (Peace Bloc), told a news conference.

The group released a partial list of some 90 Israeli companies that are based or have branches in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Arab east Jerusalem and the Golan Heights.

"Settlements are a provocation that are leading us towards war," Mr. Aynori said. "We are offering the people of Israel a means of defence."

Palestinian leaders have also called for a boycott of Israeli goods made in settlements in areas where they hope to found an independent state.

U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright this month called on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to take a "time-out" from settlement activity that has helped undermine peace efforts.

Gush Shalom called on the European Community — Israel's largest trading partner — to pressure the government to clarify whether goods labelled "Made in Israel" were produced in areas outside Israel's internationally recognised borders.

"A large portion of the thousands of flowers sent to Britain to mark Princess Diana's death were produced in Gush Katif settlements in the Gaza Strip. Europeans have no idea where these products are grown," Mr. Avneri said.

**OCCUPIED JERUSALEM** (R) — Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert was cleared of alleged campaign finance fraud Sunday in what analysts called a boost to the right-winger's quest to oust or succeed Benjamin Netanyahu as Israel's leader.

"The judge said I am innocent, that the charges against me were not proved," the 51-year-old Mr. Olmert told reporters to the cheers of supporters at the Tel Aviv district court.

Since Mr. Netanyahu, 47, became prime minister last year, Mr. Olmert — his Likud Party comrade — has in word and deed tried to position himself as a more hardline defender of Israel's claim to Jerusalem.

Political commentators said Mr. Netanyahu had denied Mr. Olmert a cabinet post over the financing affair dating back to Israel's 1983 election when Mr. Olmert was Likud treasurer.

Mr. Olmert had all along insisted he had no part in an alleged fictitious public relations firm set up to receive and disburse cor-

rate donations barred by law.

Following the verdict Mr. Olmert was terse, promising to have more to say after Jewish holidays starting Wednesday night. He said he had waited nine years for the acquittal.

Israel radio's political correspondent Yaron Dekel said that with the case behind him, Mr. Olmert would focus on national elections in three years when he might challenge Mr. Netanyahu or in the year 2004 when Mr. Netanyahu would be unable to run again.

"Today Ehud Olmert's campaign begins for the prime minister's office. It seems to me that is the bottom line of the verdict clearing Olmert of all guilt," Mr. Dekel said. "With a weak Netanyahu, Olmert's there."

The mayor has been at the forefront of at least three Arab east Jerusalem controversies — Jewish settlements at Jabal Abu Ghneim and Ras At-Amoud and a tunnel near Al Aqsa Mosque last September — that have put Israel at odds with Palestinians and its

closest ally, the U.S.

Mr. Olmert personally helped punch a new entrance — approved by Mr. Netanyahu — to the tunnel in the Muslim quarter of Jerusalem's Old City a year ago, sparking protests and gunfights which claimed the lives of 61 Palestinians and 15 Israelis.

Israeli security forces said this month they had arrested a squad of Palestinians from Hamas who had planned to abduct Mr. Olmert and bargain for the release of Palestinian prisoners held by Israel.

Mr. Olmert was a cabinet minister and government spokesman under former Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir. He won an upset victory in 1993 as mayor over octogenarian Teddy Kolek, who had been mayor of the Holy City for more than 27 years.

Israel has occupied Arab east Jerusalem since the 1967 Middle East war.

Palestinians in Arab east Jerusalem have long refused to vote in municipal elections, viewing the city's future as capital of a future independent state.

*'Britain should be very careful how it deals with this. It is a delicate balance between trade worth billions of dollars and a human rights issue to which Saudi Arabia is very sensitive.'*

DUBAI (R) — It is business as usual for British executives in Saudi Arabia and concern over the fate of two British nurses accused of murder is not felt in the corridors of companies and joint ventures.

Diplomats and several British executives said Sunday that the lucrative business ties between Saudi Arabia and Britain had been put to the test several times before — and survived.

Some said they were not concerned over a possible row between the two countries and that so far mutual financial and military interests had always set relations back on course.

Others had some reservations.

"If any sentence is carried out, be it death or flogging, it would be difficult to guess what kind of damaging commercial repercussions that would have," one British construction company executive said by telephone from Riyadh.

Britain is anxious about a sentence of 500 lashes and eight years in jail against Lucille McLauchlan, 31. A verdict has yet to be passed on Deborah Parry, 38, who could be beheaded if convicted of murder.

Both women deny killing Yvonne Gifford, an Australian nurse at a military medical centre in eastern Saudi Arabia whose body was found last December.

Legal sources in the kingdom say the cases have to go through an elaborate appeals process before any sentence could be carried out. Death sentences must be approved by King Fahd.

"There is no crisis. We are not anxious," an executive

said.

"There is a strong trade link between Britain and Saudi and I would be surprised if the issue of the nurses had a major impact on that," another executive said.

Up to 30 British companies will stage a major trade mission in Saudi Arabia in November in search of business in the industrial sector in the world's largest oil exporter.

It includes executives from some of the biggest British firms and diplomats said the visit would go ahead as scheduled.

London says the value of British investments in Saudi is \$2 billion and trade in 1996 rose 51 per cent to \$3.8 billion.

January to July exports this year rose to £1.8 billion, a 66 per cent rise from the same period the previous year, according to the British embassy in Riyadh.

Several British firms are in the running for Saudi commercial and military deals, including Vickers PLC. Vickers, which is competing to supply up to 200 tanks to Saudi Arabia.

The business executives said, however, they hoped the British government would tread carefully in dealing with the case.

"Britain should be very careful how it deals with this. It is a delicate balance between trade worth billions of dollars and a human rights issue to which Saudi Arabia is very sensitive," one said.

Britain's Foreign Secretary Robin Cook said Friday he had asked for clemency for the two nurses during a meeting in New York with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud.

Al Faisal. He said the prince's reply was encouraging.

The prince, according to Saudi press reports, told Mr. Cook that intervention in the case would complicate the issue.

The business executives said the only incident which they recalled had an impact on trade was in 1980 when a British television documentary titled "Death Of A Princess" about the execution of a Saudi princess and her lover for adultery triggered a row.

Trade was frozen, ambassadors were withdrawn and Britain was forced to offer an apology to mend relations.

Earlier this year Saudi Arabia made veiled threats that Britain might lose lucrative contracts because of criticism of the Saudi royal family by Mohammad Al Masari, a London-based dissident.

"Some companies that lost deals in Saudi at the time blamed it on Masari issue. We believe it did have some impact but not for a long time and not on a large scale," one veteran executive said.

The focus of the business relationship is the Al Yamamah arms-for-oil deal signed in the mid-1980s and worth an estimated \$20 billion. Under the 20-year agreement, British supplies Tornado aircraft built by British Aerospace PLC BAe and Saudi Arabia pays for them in oil.

Nervousness over the possible impact of a row over the purchases on Al Yamamah weighed on British aerospace shares last week, but the company played down the possible impact.



TEHRAN (AFP) — Former Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani proposed Sunday cooperation between his country, the United States and Europe to bring a "genuine" settlement to the Middle East conflict.

Mr. Rafsanjani, now serving as the head of a senior advisory body, said Iran would join efforts for Arab-Israeli peace "if the Palestinians are not denied their rights."

"If the Palestinians are given their rights, then Jews, Muslims and Christians can have a peaceful coexistence. And we will approve of that," he said in an interview with Quds newspaper.

"Iran can hold hands with the United Nations, the United States, Arab countries and Europe and create an atmosphere, where the Palestinians and others can elect" their future government," said the former president, who stepped down last month.

As a first step, he called for

Palestinian refugees to be allowed to return home. He rejected the U.S.-sponsored Middle East peace process, saying it sought to legalise the "usurpation of Palestine by a racist state."

"The status of Jerusalem, south Lebanon and the Golan Heights still remains unclear," Mr. Rafsanjani said.

Under the Oslo accords, Jerusalem's fate is to be determined in final-status talks between the Israelis and Palestinians.

On the Israeli-Syrian track, where negotiations have been suspended since February 1996, Damascus is demanding that Israel return the Golan, which it captured in the 1967 Middle East war and annexed in 1981.

Lebanon and Syria, the dominant influence in its smaller neighbour, have said there can be no Lebanese-Israeli peace agreement until Syria gets the Golan back.

Israel maintains a military "security zone" in south Lebanon in order to fend off

**TEHRAN (R)** A force of 200,000 Iranian troops on Sunday launched a major assault in the final phase of week-long - war games watched by the country's supreme leader and commander-in-chief, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

The state news agency IRNA said infantry and armoured divisions backed by heavy artillery and fighter-bombers attacked positions of a hypothetical enemy.

The fighter-bombers pounded installations, logistics positions and command outposts, disrupting communications between enemy units, it said.

"Iranian television said on the eve of the assault that a fighter-bomber made by the Iranian Air Force and named Azaraksh (Lightning) was among formations which flew past Ayatollah Khamenei and senior officers.

Local media said, last week the aircraft would carry out its first bombing mission at the climax of the exercises.

Men from naval, air and ground forces were involved in the live ammunition exercises over an 1,800-sq. km desert area in Koushk-e Nourat, 25 km north of the holy city of Qom, 120 km south of the capital Tehran.

The exercises are held every year to mark the start of the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war.

However for its destruction. Ily called Mr. Rafsanjani has taken a more moderate line on the issue.

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Egyptian agents staged the 1993 abduction of a prominent Libyan dissident in Cairo and then handed him over to the Libyan government, the Washington Post reported Sunday, quoting a CIA study.

Dissident Mansour Kikhia, who lived in the United States and was married to a U.S. citizen, was then executed by Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi, according to the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency report.

Kikhia was a former Libyan diplomat who lived in the United States for 13 years, and was just four months away from getting his U.S. citizenship when he was kidnapped, according to the Post.

**ATHENS (AFP)** — Relations between Turkey and Greece, traditionally strained, plummeted further Sunday when Greek Foreign Minister Theodore Pangalos accused his country's arch-foes of pursuing Hitler-like dreams of expansion through military force.

Turkey was following an "unacceptable policy which recalls Hitler's Germany between the two wars," he said in an interview published by the Kathimerini newspaper.

"Ankara's plans are unprecedented and illegal, and can only come about through the imposition of confrontational policies," he added.

The interview came a day after Mr. Pangalos and his Turkish counterpart, Ismail Cem, traded recriminations at the United Nations. The two men had spoken on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly Tuesday, without result.

After months of what appeared to be a slowly-calming relationship between the two countries, mediated by NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana and EU envoys, rivalries flared again last month over the traditional disputes: Ownership of

several Aegean islands and tensions over the divided island of Cyprus.

Cyprus has been divided since Turkey invaded the northern third in 1974 following a coup in Nicosia aimed at uniting the island with Greece.

Mr. Cem, on his return to Ankara, said Greece was "reducing the Aegean conflict to the problem of Kardak," an island — called Imia by Greece — claimed by both countries.

Describing the issue as an "obsession" for Athens, Mr. Cem told journalists "Greece wants Turkey to take the Kardak affair to the international court in the Hague.

"We, on the other hand, have expressed our wish to discuss the entire Aegean conflict."

He added that 12 Greek islands stretching along the Turkish coast had been armed "in violation of the Lausanne Treaty" signed in 1923 between Greece, Turkey and several other countries. He said that a statement by U.S. State Department Saturday indicated that the United States government sided with Turkey in the dispute.

Greece, too, saw agreements being trampled on in the deteriorating situation.

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Describing the issue as

Mr. Pangalos said. The two countries had agreed to abide by the principles of peace, the respect of international law and putting aside territorial claims.

Defending the Cypriot government's planned deployment of Russian S-300 air-defence missiles — a point which has enraged



**Back from the dead to reclaim his vital organs**

VIRGINIA (AFP) — A man pronounced dead here but whose body remained on life support was found to be alive when doctors prepared to remove his vital organs for donations, police here said. Henry Edgar Kaiser 35, was found shot in his home late Wednesday and was rushed to the Riverside Regional Medical Centre for emergency surgery. Kaiser was in an extremely critical condition for the next 36 hours, and was pronounced dead early Friday. Kaiser's body, however, was kept on life support machines because his family had donated his organs to needy patients. Organ recipients were alerted, but when doctors went to remove the organs late Friday, Kaiser was found to be alive.

### TV star Ellen's gay kiss a loser in the ratings

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — Comedian Ellen DeGeneres, star of the prime-time sitcom "Ellen," made a high splash earlier this year when she acknowledged her homosexuality by kissing another woman on the show that airs on the ABC Network. The controversial episode had high viewer ratings, and was the source of endless discussion in the news media and in the gay community across the country. However, viewers apparently began to give her performance two thumbs down as soon as the bull-balloo over the gay kiss had passed. DeGeneres' popularity has plummeted to a record low, according to an internal ABC memorandum cited in New York magazine. DeGeneres has a negative TV-Q rating—a method measuring a television star's popularity — of 49, according to a source quoted by the magazine.

**Major's elder brother was offered doorman job at Harrods**

LONDON (AFP) — Not long before John Major was kicked out of Downing Street, his older brother was offered a job as a doorman at Harrods, the Sunday Mirror has disclosed. This would have made Terry Major-Ball, 65, an employee of Harrods' owner Mohammad Fayed, the man who helped topple Major's government over a cash-for-questions scandal in parliament. But Terry, 65, turned it down because he thought it might embarrass his brother, a Harrods spokeswoman told the paper.

### Thousands of 'sausage-shaped' parade through city

KRAKOW (AFP) — Thousands of Dachshund dogs paraded through the streets of this old southern Polish city in a special annual show to elect the best of the breed. The sausage-shaped hounds came in numerous styles. Short haired, long haired, wire-haired were all represented as well as those dressed by their owners in straw hats, crowns and white veils. Back from the dead to reclaim their vital organs.

**Crown Prince to marry**

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